

A College of Education, worth the name, must have

1. a highly qualified staff of willing full-time workers with decent salaries ;
2. a kindergarten class ;
3. a Montessori school ;
4. a well-equipped and co-educational practising school ;
5. a beautiful and rich library ;
6. a number of well-constituted study-circles ;
7. a journal publishing its problems and resources ;
8. a work-shop to manufacture teaching apparatus ;
9. a regular book-stall ;
10. an information bureau ;
11. an employment bureau ;
12. a child guidance clinic ;
13. a psychological laboratory ;

In short,

14. It must be a home of education, a place where it should be possible for any one to see how Individuality can be developed ; how, in other words, the child can be helped to be a good citizen, respecting all the while his autonomy (home-rule) which is the gift of the Creator.

A REVIEW OF MODERN EDUCATION IN INDIA (1813 - 1942)

BY
Prof. J. P. Naik, B. A.

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A REVIEW OF MODERN EDUCATION IN INDIA (1813 - 1942)

BY
Prof. J. P. Naik, B. A.

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Prof. J. P. Naik delivered this year three series of lectures under the auspices of the Tilak College of Education. The subjects of the three series were: 1. *Primary Education: A new view-point*, 2. *A Review of Education in Modern India* and 3. *The Establishment and Growth of Universities in India*. Prof. Naik's lectures were highly appreciated by the College pupils and Prof. Naik offered to reproduce his second series in a book-form. Prof. Naik is an honorary member of the College Staff and it is in the fitness of things that this book should appear as a Tilak College Publication.

Prof. Naik has himself given us a splendid lead in making a solid contribution to the Swadeshi Movement in Education. It should be the earnest endeavour of the staff and the pupils of the Tilak College to take the lead and follow it up. We have firm faith in the magic of the name of the Mahatma whose name we have chosen to adopt and we are sure that it will work as a source of inspiration for the purpose.

Our thanks are due to the Aryabhushan Press for undertaking the work at this time.

March 15th, 1943

M. S. GODBOLE
Principal, Tilak College

TO
KRISHNABAI PANJIKAR

PROLOGUE

1. The history of education in India under the British Rule is like a great drama.

2. The *setting* of the play consists, as may be easily imagined, of the social, political, and constitutional history of India. For instance, the rapid expansion of education in the present century has its origin in the modern national awakening in India; the history of primary education is indissolubly connected with that of local self-government institutions; and the transfer of education to Indian control in 1921 is but an aspect of the ever-increasing share which the people of the country have come to possess in its administration. But this is not all. The events in the educational history of England have also exercised a great influence on the educational developments in India. Several Indian institutions were planned on similar institutions in England; often, the controversies in Indian Education arose out of contemporary controversies at 'Home'; and oftener still, a change in the educational policy of England had its echoes in Indian education also, sooner or later. It is impossible to understand the history of Indian education if this background is not constantly kept in view, and a student of the educational history of India must familiarise himself with it as closely as possible.

3. The *actors* in the drama may be divided into three groups: Missionaries, Government Officials—I mean European Officials who held, until very recently, all the keyposts in the Education Department—and the Indian people. At first, Indians were as voiceless clay, and the

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role of the potters was assumed by the Missionaries and Government Officials. Gradually, however, the clay developed a national form of its own and, in the teeth of opposition from vested interests, raised itself to the dignity of a potter. It is now both the educand and the educator—the only role, I should observe, in which a country can build up its system of national education. This change from a passive to an active role, this metamorphosis of the clay into the potter himself, is, and ought to be, the main theme of the history of Indian education in the modern period.

4. The *conflict* of the drama has varied from time to time, as these lectures will show. But broadly speaking, it may be described as the conflict between the East and the West, between the Old and the New, between the desire of European educationists to foist upon India a cheap imitation of British institutions and the dream of the nationally-minded Indian educationists to evolve a new system of education, in keeping with the social, cultural, and economic environment of the country.

5. The drama is divided into *five Acts*. The first extends from 1813 to 1854, the second, from 1855 to 1900, the third, from 1901 to 1921, the fourth, from 1921 to 1937, and the fifth has just opened in the last mentioned year when Provincial Autonomy was introduced under the Government of India Act of 1935. Each of these Acts has special characteristics of its own to the closer examination of which, I shall now turn.

Act The First

(1813–1854)

EXPERIMENTATION

1. The bells that rang out the year 1600 rang in the East India Company, a corporation of 'certain diverse merchants of London' with a monopoly of trade with India and the East. For a number of years, the Company was mainly, if not exclusively, engaged in trade. But gradually it became a political power in India. The grant of the Diwani in 1765 brought large territories under its administrative control. Every successive decade saw additions to its possessions until, in 1854, the Company became the ruler of the vast Indian Empire. It is, however, interesting to note that as the Indian Empire went on *increasing*, the Company's independent powers went on *decreasing*. Pitt's India Act of 1784 created a Board of Control to effectively supervise the political affairs of the Company; the Charter Act of 1813 abolished the commercial monopoly of the Company in all matters except tea and China trade; the Charter Act of 1833 abolished the Company as a commercial body; and gradually changes were introduced in the Board of Control which reduced the Company to the position of an agent of Parliament for carrying on the administration of India. These two processes viz. the increase in the Company's dominions and the decrease in its powers went on side by side and, in 1858, when the Empire of the Company had reached its largest size, the Company ceased to exist and the Government of India came directly under the Parliament.

2. While the East India Company was thus engaged successfully in establishing a *political empire* in India, another set of workers—the Missionaries—were engaged in spreading the Word of God among the 'heathen' people and in trying to establish the *spiritual empire* of Jesus Christ in India. They were not successful in their main endeavour; but their work, especially in the educational field, is of great importance to a student of the educational history of India. For, it was the Missionaries who were the pioneers in the modern educational system of the country.

3. It is a common weakness of historians to put the origin of their subject as far back in the past as they possibly can, and one need not be surprised if one were to come across historians of missions in India who try to hint that the missionary connection with India may have begun early in the first century A. D. But such historical controversies are beyond our scope and I may well confine my observations to modern missionary enterprise which began in southern India, particularly in the province of Madras, then in Bengal and Bombay, and finally spread to the whole of India. As Richter points out, modern missionary work in India has grown up in the shadow of the British Empire 'advancing where it advanced, and halting where it halted'. It is, however, interesting to note that although the political empire in India was built up by England and Portugal only, the spiritual empire of Christ transcended political divisions and included, within its fold, the workers of several other nationalities also. The history of this missionary expansion may be read with interest from the several books available on the subject, and particularly from Richter's "History of Missions in India". It is neither possible for me, nor is it necessary for my purpose, to deal with the growth of mission work

as such. It will be sufficient if I refer to and discuss such of its aspects only as are connected with the development of modern education in India.

4. In the early years of the life of the East India Company, the relations between the Company and the missionaries were those of close sympathy. In fact, the Company itself appears to have taken up activities of a more or less proselytising nature. Thus, we have on record the case of an Indian convert to Christianity who was sent to England at the Company's cost for being trained as a priest. In 1659, the Directors expressed their earnest desire to spread the Gospel. The Charter of 1698 contained the famous *missionary clause* according to which, the Company was required to maintain a priest in each garrison who was to instruct all its servants—whether Europeans or Indians—in the Christian religion. A despatch of the Court of Directors, dated 1787, speaks in high terms about the work of Schwarz, a missionary, and sanctions a grant to his English schools. It is of course difficult to understand why a Company of traders should undertake or encourage the work of proselytisation. It may be due to the desire to help the Church—a desire which rich people sometimes manifest in order to ensure a safe entry into the Kingdom of Heaven. It may also be due to the commercial motive because it was often preached that Christians had more wants than heathens and were, therefore, more profitable as prospective customers than Hindus or Muslims. It may even be due to the political motive of 'divide and rule' because it was often argued that the presence of Christians—who were expected to feel more at ease with Europeans than with any section of Indians—would effectually prevent the union of the Indian people and would consequently perpetuate British Rule in India. Be that as it may with the East

India Company—the problem requires a closer and more careful study than it has been possible for me to undertake—it is an undisputed fact that in the western attempt to colonize or build up empires in eastern lands, the soldier, the trader and the priest have very often worked together, hand in hand.

5. But towards the close of the eighteenth century, there was a parting of ways. The Company had now become a political power in India. Its officers realised that if they desired to consolidate an Empire in India, they must not disturb the religious sentiments of the people who valued their religion above everything else in life, even above liberty. This was the famous doctrine of “religious neutrality”—the trump card of the stabilization of the empire, just as the disciplined army was of its conquest. It was soon obvious that encouragement to missionary enterprise was inconsistent with the policy of religious neutrality. The Company had to choose between the one or the other, and political considerations led for the adoption of the latter. *The Addresses to Hindus and Mussalmans* prepared by the *Serampore Trio* of missionaries led to a consternation among the people and had to be followed by a declaration of religious neutrality; the Sepoy Mutiny at Vellore was followed by a similar declaration; and as time went on and the Company's empire began to grow, its policy towards missionaries rapidly changed from encouragement to indifference and from indifference to hostility.

6. This change in the policy was in evidence as early as 1793. When the Charter Act of this year was under consideration in Parliament, Wilberforce moved that missionaries should be sent out to India—a proposal which the Court of Directors opposed with all the emphasis at their

command. They succeeded; but the Charter Act of 1793 marked the beginning of a great conflict between the missionaries and the Company—a conflict that was in full swing for twenty years and was only partially closed by the Charter Act of 1813. The main question at issue was whether missionaries should or should not be allowed to go and work in India. The Directors opposed this move on several grounds, the most important of which was that the proselytising activities of the missionaries would lead to undesirable political repercussions. The missionaries, on the other hand, pointed out the great ignorance and immorality that prevailed in India—a statement based on a perverted and exaggerated picture of Indian Society drawn by Charles Grant, a Director of the Company, who had served as a factor for some time in India—and argued that the communication of western ‘light and knowledge’ would alone save the souls of Indian people. After a prolonged and heated controversy, they finally succeeded. The Charter Act of 1813 opened India to the missionary workers—a privilege that was mostly used by missions of the United Kingdom only during the next two decades.

7. But this very Charter Act which, in a way, marked a great triumph for missionaries contained the seed of a State system of education in India—a seed that grew up to be a mighty plant in the following seventy years and ultimately became the great rival of missionary enterprise itself. It will be recalled that the Company was established in 1600; but it is necessary to note that for nearly two hundred years after its establishment, it did next to nothing to educate the Indian people. In the first place, it was no duty of a trading corporation to educate the people it traded with or fattened on; and even when the Company became a ruling power, say in 1765, it was still a moot point whether the Company should or should not

undertake the work of educating the people. The enlightened servants of the Company like Warren Hastings, Jonathan Duncan, and Lord Moira, argued that, as successors to Indian rulers who gave liberal encouragement to learning, it was the duty of the Company to promote the education of Indians. They believed that encouragement to Indian education would conciliate the people to the foreign rule, and would also secure a class of cheap servants to the Company. It was with these objects that Warren Hastings established the Calcutta Madressah in 1781 and Jonathan Duncan established the Benares Sanskrit College in 1791. On the other hand, the Company's Directors were unwilling to follow this advice. They pointed out that, even in England, Parliament did nothing at that time for the education of the people; that education was not a duty of the State but of the Church; and that encouragement of Indian education would often mean interference with the century-old educational institutions of the country—an eventuality which the people would greatly resent and which had, therefore, to be avoided on grounds of political expediency. The question was discussed often without any definite conclusion being reached. Funnily, however, a clear decision was given by the Charter Act of 1813. Those who had unsuccessfully opposed the missionary effort to go to India suddenly discovered that it would be desirable to create a counterpoise to missionary activities in India. It was with this end in view that they succeeded in inserting a clause in the Charter Act of 1813 which provided that a sum of not less than a lac of rupees should be annually expended by the Company on “the revival and improvement of literature”, “the encouragement of the learned Natives of India”, and on the “promotion of a knowledge of the sciences” among the Indian people. This was the beginning of the State system of education in India—a beginning that we

owe, not so much to the Company's solicitude for the Indian people, as to its desire to oppose the politically dangerous enterprise of the missionaries.

8. The Charter Act of 1813 was followed, during the next forty years, by a good deal of educational activity in official as well as missionary circles. As may be easily imagined, these early years of educational enterprise were *a period of experimentation*. It must be noted that the field was entirely new; the persons who were called upon to work out schemes were priests, civilians, soldiers, or traders but *not* educationists; the services of the Company's servants were not devoted wholly to education—each of them had his own legitimate duties to perform and was called upon to plan out an educational system for the country in his *spare time* and in an *honorary capacity*; similarly, the missionaries of these days were priests in the first instance, and they had to take up teaching work as a matter of necessity and only as a subsidiary occupation. It was, therefore, natural that controversies should arise; it was quite pardonable if several experiments were undertaken before a final decision was arrived at; and it was even inevitable that mistakes would occur.

9. To begin with, I shall take up the discussion of the educational activities of the missionaries which go far back in the past although they received an impetus only after 1813. In this connection, I would like to point out that the main work of the missionaries was that of conversions and that their educational activities were only a by-product, an inevitable corollary of the work of proselytisation. In fact, there was a time in early missionary history when the ‘Home Authorities’ of Missions refused to countenance educational institutions and opined that priests had no business to found schools. But the early

missionaries soon found out by experience that their work did not end, but rather began with a conversion. For instance, the early converts to Christianity who came mostly from the lowest strata of Hindu Society were Christians in nothing except name. They observed the caste, the Hindu festivals and holidays, and several Hindu customs to which they were accustomed; their cultural level was low—they were generally illiterate and unable to read the Bible; their social status was also low and their economic condition was almost hopeless; they were looked down upon by the Hindus and the Company did not employ them for fear of offending Indian prejudices by appearing to encourage conversions. The missionary fathers, therefore, found that they must exert themselves to improve the social, cultural, and economic condition of their flock, or else they would be failing in their duty. The task was arduous and difficult; in fact, the missionaries were no better off than the farmer in the folk-tale who found one horse-shoe and was thereupon compelled to purchase three horse-shoes and a horse. But there was no escape from the hard realities and, as education was the only means of achieving their object, the early missionaries had to start schools for Indian Christians with a view to training chaplains for missionary work and raising the social, economic, and cultural level of the converted population.

10. Two features of these early schools of missionaries deserve special notice. In the first place, they were intended mainly, if not exclusively for Christian converts; they were a consequence of proselytisation and not a means of extending it. Secondly, most of these schools were for elementary education and taught through the mother-tongue of the pupils. It must be noted that the attitude of the missionaries to modern Indian languages was quite

different from that of the officials. For instance, the view of Macaulay that the dialects spoken by the people were too 'rude and poor' to be able to express noble ideas never found adherents among the missionaries. On the other hand, the mission workers assiduously studied the modern Indian languages, prepared their grammars and dictionaries, translated the Bible into them, and also printed books written in these languages. On religious grounds, the missionaries had no use for Sanskrit or Arabic education; nor had they much use for English Education because it did not secure the Indian Christians any job under the Company. The principle of education through the mother-tongue, therefore, was almost universally adopted by the missionaries in the early years.

11. The mission schools for teaching English were a later development and owed their origin to the efforts of the younger generation of missionaries which included men like Duff, Wilson, and Anderson. These men held a belief that English education would be inevitably followed by conversions to christianity. The idea first occurs in *Grant's observations*, dated 1797, and hardly any arguments are needed to prove its fallibility. As M. R. Paranjpe observed, English education made the pupils lose faith in Hindu superstitions without training them to accept Christian superstitions as a substitute. But this eye-opener came later, and the belief that English education would lead to conversion was almost universal in the eighteen twenties and thirties. One need not be surprised, therefore, if the missionaries of this period advocated *the establishment of English schools as a means of spreading Christianity*. Moreover, the cause of the English schools was advocated on another ground also. The elementary schools of missionaries were rarely attended by pupils of the upper classes who obtained such instruction either at

home or in the indigenous schools. But the English schools of the missionaries were largely attended by the upper classes who were quick to realise that a knowledge of English was equivalent to a good vocational training. It secured, at one stroke, the whitecoated profession of a Government employee, a status in society, and an enviable economic security. In a country that was rapidly being impoverished the career of a well-paid employee of Government was naturally the most covetable of vocations, and it is not to be wondered at if, as a means of obtaining it, English education, even in a missionary school with its compulsory Bible period, gained a sudden popularity among the upper classes. The younger missionaries, therefore, argued that the English schools were the best means of approaching the upper classes of the Hindu Society and of securing converts from their midst. These were formidable arguments; after a brief struggle with the older people who could not look beyond the elementary schools, they won the battle; and an era of mission English schools set in.

12. Duff opened his English school in Calcutta in 1830 and it was so successful that his example was copied by missionaries all over India. Meanwhile, the Charter Act of 1833 was followed by the entry of a number of missions from Germany and America into the Indian field; the ban on the employment of Indian Christians was lifted up and the policy of employing English knowing Indians was largely adopted by the Company. The result was overwhelming. Missionary Schools for the teaching of English multiplied greatly and flourished to such an extent that Richter describes the period between 1830 and 1857 as "the age of the Mission school".

13. Let me turn now to the development of official activities in education. As I have already stated, section 43 of the Charter Act of 1813 made the Company accept the responsibility for the education of the Indian people. But its pious wishes remained practically a dead letter for about ten years and then began an era of a sudden and widespread educational activity. The Government of Bengal appointed a General Committee of Public Instruction in 1823; Sir Thomas Munro, the Governor of Madras, sent round a questionnaire regarding indigenous schools in 1822; and Mount-Stuart Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, wrote his famous Minute on education in 1823 and elaborated plans for the educational reorganisation of his Province. Of these three attempts, the plans of Munro are not of any practical importance. They were framed in 1826; but Munro died in 1827 and although his proposals were sanctioned by the Court of Directors in 1828, his successors did not pursue them with zeal or interest. But the schemes of Bengal and Bombay deserve a careful analysis

14. The General Committee of Public Instruction for Bengal consisted of ten members *not one of whom was an Indian*. It included, however, such oriental scholars as H. H. Wilson (who was its Secretary) and H. T. Prinsep whose name has come down to history as the antagonist of Macaulay. Almost all the members were the older servants of the Company who believed that the policy of Warren Hastings, Cornwallis, or Moira was the last word in educational statesmanship; they believed in the utility of eastern learning, not only by easterners, but by Westerners also; they were excessively obsessed by the fear of offending the prejudices of Indian people; they shunned all innovations, like pestilence; and they were so conservative as to look with disfavour on any but the slowest

and the least important of changes. It is hardly a matter of surprise, therefore, if the General Committee decided to stick to the policy of Warren Hastings, and to patronise classical Hindu and Muslim learning. It adopted the classical languages as media of instruction; it established a Sanskrit College at Calcutta and Oriental Colleges at Agra and Delhi; it published important works in Sanskrit, Arabic, or Persian; and it also undertook the translation of European scientific works in the classical languages of the East. In short, the policy of the Committee may be briefly described as "classicism in excelsis" and, with small concessions made to its opponents, this policy dominated the field till 1835 when Macaulay gave a deathblow to it.

15. The Bombay experiment—which was not entirely in accordance with the proposals of Elphinstone although based upon it—was essentially different. Two of its features stand out prominently. In the first place, Indians were closely associated with the educational reorganisation in Bombay. All the educational institutions in the Province except the Poona College and the Elphinstone Institution were managed by the Bombay Native Education Society which had a very large Indian element in its constitution; and even when the Society was abolished and a Board of Education was created in 1840, three out of its seven members were Indians. Secondly, the idea of adopting a classical language as a medium of instruction did not find a footing in Bombay. The mystic saints of Maharashtra like Dnyaneshwar and others had settled the dispute between the classical and modern languages some centuries ago and the opinion in Bombay was almost unanimous that the mother-tongue of the child can be the only good medium of instruction. The Bombay view was that a careful study of English as well as of the classical

and modern Indian Languages was necessary for the revival and improvement of literature and the spread of knowledge among the people. The English language, Major Candy had observed, would supply *ideas* and the modern Indian languages, enriched and improved by the study of the classical languages, would form the *means* of spreading knowledge among the people. From the educational point of view, therefore, the experiment in Bombay was far more sound than that in Bengal; and it is a significant fact, let me repeat, that this was the one experiment with whose working Indians themselves were largely and closely associated.

16. Schools teaching through the medium of the mother-tongue and imparting instruction of a fairly advanced type in almost all branches of Western knowledge and science formed, therefore, the most important part of the educational institutions in the Province of Bombay. These schools were called "Primary" because, in those days, *Primary Education was defined as the spread of Western knowledge and science through the medium of the mother-tongue*. The syllabus of these schools included the three R.s algebra, geometry, trigonometry, astronomy, natural philosophy and history of England and India. It will, therefore, be seen that these schools really imparted instruction of a secondary grade. Col. Jervis even conducted an Engineering Class and a Medical class in Bombay in both of which the medium of instruction was the mother-tongue of the students. Had not unfortunate influences from Bengal percolated down to the Provincial headquarters, Bombay would undoubtedly have developed high schools, colleges, and even a university teaching through the modern Indian languages. But that was not to be.

17. It is interesting to compare carefully the educational policy of Bengal with that of Bombay. In both the schemes, the indigenous schools conducted by Indians at that time were entirely ignored; in both the provinces, the policy of Government was based on the *downward filtration theory*, that is to say, on the idea that Government need only educate a few persons—preferably from the upper classes of society—and that these educated persons would do the work of spreading the knowledge they had received among the masses. But here the similarity ends. The differences, on the other hand, are more numerous and vastly more important. The Bengal plan concentrated on the cultivation of the classical languages for their own sake; in Bombay, Sanskrit was studied with a view to the enrichment of modern Indian languages. In Bengal, “the spread of Western knowledge” was an aim subsidiary to that of “the revival and improvement” of classical literature and was attempted in the absurd manner of *engrafting* it on the study of classical languages; in Bombay, the spread of Western knowledge was *the* aim of the educational system and it was attempted in a straightforward and effective manner by adopting the modern Indian Languages as media of instruction. In Bengal, the opinion of Indians themselves was never consulted; the memorial of Raja Ram Mohan Roy against the opening of a Sanskrit College at Calcutta was brushed aside as so much waste paper: Government was guided, as Macaulay said later on, by what it considered to be good for the *health* of the people and not by their *taste*; in Bombay, on the other hand, Indians were closely associated with educational reconstruction, and the taste of the people was regarded as a good indication of what may be good for their health also.

18. A still more interesting comparison is that between official effort on the one hand and missionary effort on the other. The motives of the officials were political: their first object was to placate those classes at the upper end of the society which had lost their old glory on account of the change of Government and they used education as a means to this end. Hence it was that they began with the downward filtration theory and encouraged Sanskrit and Arabic learning. The motives of the missionaries, on the other hand, were religious; like the officials, they too used education merely as a means to an end; but unlike them, they began at the lower end of the social order and worked upwards—on a *capillary theory*, so to speak. It is necessary to remember these differences—which are generally ignored—in order to understand clearly the conflicts of this period.

19. To resume our narrative of the official enterprise; it is interesting to note that the official schemes in Bombay and Bengal met with a considerable opposition. In Bengal, the opposition came from an enlightened Indian, Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He held the view that a regeneration of Indian national life was possible only if India drank deep at the fountain of Western knowledge. He, therefore, advocated the study of English language, English literature, and European sciences. In order to give a practical effect to his ideas, he also organised the Hindu Vidyalaya in Calcutta with the object of training Hindu youths in Western learning. This opposition is extremely significant, for it marks the beginning of the Indian thirst for Western knowledge—a thirst that increased enormously and continuously throughout the nineteenth century.

20. In Bombay, on the other hand, the opposition came from an Englishman—Warden—who was a member

of the executive Council of the Governor of Bombay. He believed in the education of a class and considered that the Bombay effort of educating the masses was too big to be practically successful. He also believed in imparting a knowledge of English to Indians and in the adoption of English as a medium of instruction. He was, in short, one of the earliest specimens of a class of English officials who ultimately came to dominate Indian education throughout the nineteenth century.

21. In the early years of the educational reorganisation, men like Warden or Raja Ram Mohan Roy formed the 'still, small voice' of opposition. But by 1835, their ranks were considerably strengthened. The missionaries were naturally opposed to the policy of the General Committee of Public Instruction for Bengal; the number of Indians who held the same educational views as the Raja was rapidly increasing; and the junior civil servants of the Company mostly came to hold the views which Warden had expressed a decade earlier. They were brought up in the traditions of the romantic revival and were impatient to shatter the old order and to usher in the new; they chafed at the conservatism of the older officials; and their convictions of the greatness of Western knowledge and English literature were only equalled by their ignorance of Eastern literature and their contempt of Indian learning. The missionaries, this younger generation of officials, and the Indians who belonged to the new school initiated by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, formed the new party in education—the torch-bearers of a new system which came to be universalised in later years.

22. For some time, however, the successes of this new party were not equal to their enthusiasm, mainly because they did not have a leader of capacity and influence. It

was precisely this role that Macaulay fulfilled when he came to India in 1834 as the Law Member of the Executive Council of the Governor-General and was appointed, on account of his high literary reputation, the President of the General Committee of Public Instruction for Bengal. Under such able and influential leadership, the success of the new party was both assured and immediate.

23. Macaulay wrote his famous Minute on the subject of education in February 1835. His attack was directed against the weaker of the two official experiments i. e. the Bengal one and his task was, therefore, comparatively easy. He roundly condemned the value of Eastern literature and religions in a manner which no self-respecting Indian can tolerate; he assumed, without any justification, —his missionary friends could have easily enlightened him on the point—that the modern Indian languages were unfit to be used as media of instruction; he praised the utility and greatness of the English language in terms which were worthy of a typical 'philistine'—as Matthew Arnold would have called him; and he concluded by proposing that the object of British educational policy in India was to create a class of persons who would be English in everything except blood and colour, and to that end, to encourage the spread of Western knowledge and science through the medium of the English language. The classicists offered some resistance, but it was of no avail. Lord William Bentinck accepted the proposals and for nearly a hundred years, the policy recommended by Macaulay dominated the field of Indian education.

24. This brilliant success of Macaulay has been variously described—some praise him as the torch-bearer of progress while others condemn him as the cause of all

modern discontent. In reality, his policy has been both a blessing and a curse. He was undoubtedly right when he recommended the abandonment of the old methods of classical learning and suggested that Indians should try to assimilate Western knowledge. But he was wrong in suggesting the adoption of English as a medium of instruction. The study of English as a subject would have secured all the benefits of Western knowledge without the harmful effects which follow the use of a foreign medium of instruction. The first part of his recommendations has done a great good. But the second part has done a great harm too; and it is an idle speculation to try to weigh these results and decide which is greater.

25. Macaulay's minute and Bentinck's Resolution silenced the controversy for a while but did not end it. It lingered on for some time and was again reopened under Lord Auckland. In a minute, dated 1839,—a document which is generally neglected but which deserves a careful perusal—Auckland came to the conclusion that the fierce controversy between Anglicists and classicists was really *financial* in origin; that each party tried to run the other down because the funds available were extremely limited and it was a struggle for existence, as it were; and that, if additional funds had been provided, each party would have allowed the other to pursue its own experiment in peace. He, therefore, guaranteed to the classicists the continuance of existing institutions of classical learning—'twas all they wanted—and even spared some funds for the publication of oriental works. At the same time, he allotted additional funds to English education also and gave it as his definite conclusion that the best type of education for India was that which had as its object the spread of Western Sciences and knowledge and which was

imparted through the medium of English. He was requested to make the modern Indian languages the medium of instruction at the Secondary stage at least; but he refused to do so on the queer ground that the *status quo* should be maintained unless there were strong reasons to the contrary. The views of Auckland were ratified by the Court of Directors in 1841 and, so far as Bengal is concerned, the controversy came to an end.

26. It may be noted that this controversy 'did not affect Madras because the Madras Government did very little for education prior to 1854 and because the policy in Madras came generally to be dictated from Calcutta. But in Bombay, with its definite sympathy for the use of the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction, a controversy was bound to arise. This actually happened between, 1845-49. At this time, the educational affairs of the province were superintended by a Board of Education which had been constituted in 1840 and which consisted of seven members four of whom were Europeans and three Indians. When the question regarding the medium of instruction arose, the three Indian members and an Englishman—Col. Jervis—took the side of modern Indian languages, and the remaining three Englishmen pleaded for the adoption of English as medium of instruction. The question was finally referred to the Government of Bombay. It gave a rather ambiguous reply which, however, breathed sentiments much in favour of the use of the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction. But gradually, influences from Bengal came to be felt; and soon afterwards, Bombay also fell in line with Bengal.

27. A little later came the great Despatch of 1854. It settled a number of old controversies. It declared that the spread of western knowledge and science was the grand

object of British educational policy in India ; it opined that while English should continue to be the medium of instruction at the collegiate stage, both English and the modern Indian Languages should be developed as the media of instruction at the secondary stage ; it abandoned the downward filtration theory and directed that the attempts of Government should be directed in future to the spread of European knowledge ' of a less high order ' to a greater number of people ; it proposed the creation of universities and provincial departments of public instruction ; it recognised the importance of missionary enterprise as also that of the private enterprise of Indians themselves introduced the system of grant-in-aid, and even looked forward to the time when it would be possible for Government to withdraw from the field ; it proposed the founding of training institutions for teachers and emphasized the importance of the spread of education among women ; and lastly, it spoke of a considerable increase of expenditure with a view to organising a network of schools all over the country which would consist of colleges for the spread of highest European knowledge at the top, schools for imparting instruction suited to every station in life in the middle, and the indigenous schools of elementary instruction at the bottom—all these different types of institutions being connected with one another by a system of scholarships. In short, the Despatch marked the close of a period of experiments and laid, in broad outline, the foundation of a state system of education in India.

28. Taken all in all, it was a day of small beginnings. In 1855, the total number of educational institutions in

British India, excluding the indigenous schools for which nothing had been done, was as under :

	Institutions	Scholars
Arts Colleges.	21	3,246
Professional Colleges and Schools other than Normal schools.	13	912
Secondary Schools.	281	33,801
Primary Schools.	2,810	96,923
Normal Schools and classes.	7	197
Total	3,132	1,35,079

The figures hardly need any comment, especially if we remember that the population of India at that time was about 20 crores. Obviously, this period has been one of exploratory spade-work and of experiments and controversy rather than of substantial achievements in the field of education.

29. The main interest of this Act in the drama lies, therefore, in the *conflict between Missionary and Official enterprise*. The conflicts within the Official fold were entirely subsidiary to this main conflict and may even be described as consequences thereof. It will have been realised from the foregoing narrative that the Missionaries scored victory after victory. Their first success was the insertion of the Missionary clause in the Charter of 1698. A greater triumph was the Charter Act of 1813 which opened India to Missionary enterprise. The Charter of 1833 went a step further. It opened India to missions of all countries, and secured the right of employment under the Company

to Indian Christians. The minutes of Macaulay and Auckland marked still greater victories because these were tantamount to the admission that the earlier official experiments in education were entirely wrong and that the ideals of missionaries were fundamentally right. But to crown all, the greatest triumph was the Despatch of 1854 which gave official recognition to the valuable missionary work in education, promised connivance at their religious instruction, undertook to encourage the study of the Bible even in Government institutions which ought to have been entirely secular, and assured a financial support to missionary institutions. It even spoke of a withdrawal of Government from the educational field in favour of private enterprise which, in those days, meant missionary enterprise only. In short, the Despatch was a realisation of missionary ambitions, a veritable *Magna Charta of missionary enterprise in Indian education*.

Act The Second (1855-1900)

WESTERNIZATION

1. It was the Englishmen of the later Victorian era who guided the destinies of Indian education during the period of about five decades between Wood's Education Despatch of 1854 and the conference of the Directors of Public Instruction which Lord Curzon convened in 1901. It was, therefore, natural that the characteristics of this era should have left their imprint on contemporary Indian educational policy. As instances in point, I shall mention only two of these. Students of English literary history will recall that the Englishmen of the later Victorian era were extremely self-complacent, quite certain that they were the best race in all the world. Consequently, we find that the officials of this period looked down with utter contempt on indigenous schools and that they reorganised Indian education on the assumption that Indians could do no better than imitate English models. *Thus arose the conflict between the indigenous schools and the official system of education*. Similarly, the spiritual conflicts that arose in England during this period owing to the clash between science and religion are also familiar to students of English literary history. It is hardly a matter of surprise, therefore, if this conflict in English spiritual life had its counterpart in India in *the conflict that arose between the officials and the missionaries*. It is the detailed history of these two conflicts that I propose to deal with in this talk.

2. At the advent of British rule, there was, throughout the country, a fairly widespread network of indi-

genous schools—I am using the expression ‘indigenous schools’ to denote those educational institutions of India which had grown up since times immemorial and which had survived even the severe strain of the anarchy that followed the disruption of the Mughal empire. These indigenous schools were of two types—the indigenous *schools of learning* where Sanskrit and Arabic were taught and the indigenous *elementary schools* which gave instruction in the three Rs. I do not propose to discuss the indigenous schools of learning. Their number was small; their instruction was confined to an infinitesimally small portion of the population; and they were out of touch with modern requirements. One need not, therefore, be sorry that they died out. But the elementary indigenous schools were extremely numerous—in fact, almost every village had one such school, if not more, and they gave elementary education to an appreciable percentage of the population at a low cost and in a convenient manner. The disappearance of these schools meant a great loss to mass education in India—a loss that was hardly made up, even as late as in 1901–02, by the new primary schools which the departments of education had organised in their stead. It is to this problem of the indigenous elementary schools only that I shall confine my discussion.

3. Our data regarding the extent and condition of indigenous schools at the advent of British rule are both meagre and largely unreliable. In the first place, we have the record of three inquiries only—the first of which was conducted by Munro in the province of Madras (1822), the second was conducted by Elphinstone in Bombay (1823), and the third was conducted by W. Adam in Bengal (1835–38). The first of these referred to all the districts in the Province except that of Canara, the second to the whole Province, and the third to five districts only out of a total of

nineteen. We have, therefore, to proceed on the assumption that these enquiries relate to good samples, and that the conclusions which can be deduced from them are applicable to India as a whole. Such an assumption is inevitable in the absence of any other data; and as the Indian Education Commission has observed that, in spite of the diversities of race, character, and history that were to be found in the several provinces of India, the nature of the indigenous system of education was generally uniform, this assumption is more likely to be correct than otherwise.

4. The enquiries in Bombay and Madras are extremely unsatisfactory from the statistical point of view. In the first place, both these enquiries exclude the statistics of pupils under *domestic instruction* which, in those days, was far more prevalent than instruction in a formal school of the type to which we are accustomed. Secondly, allowance must also be made for the imperfections of the administrative machinery of those days which could never be expected to collect statistics with any degree of accuracy. One has only to refer to one's personal experience to realise that, even today, the statistics collected through the overburdened and unimaginative revenue department often give one a wrong picture of the whole situation. But that question apart, I might refer to an interesting incident of 1881–82. When the Indian Education Commission was holding its enquiry, the Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, reported that there were 6,362 indigenous schools with 86,025 pupils in his province. But the figures were challenged, a re-check was ordered, and it was discovered that there were as many as 13,109 indigenous schools with 1,35,384 pupils. If such was the case in 1881–82, one can only imagine what accuracy there can be in the figures collected in the eighteen twenties when

the administrative machinery was inadequate and hardly established, and the people often deliberately concealed information on account of their suspicions of the new and alien government. Even at the time of the enquiry itself, Munro has made a definite statement that his figures were underestimated by a large percentage. We shall, therefore, be on a very slippery footing if we take the results of the Madras or Bombay enquiries for our guides.

5. The Bengal enquiry, on the other hand, is entirely different. This was not a question of requesting the collectors to report on the number of schools and scholars (who in their turn passed on the order to others till some body at the other end of the machine put down the reply in a shabby manner) and then totalling up the figures supplied by them. An enthusiastic missionary, honest as a day, was put on special duty for the purpose; he worked like a slave for three years and has left on record three full and detailed reports of his investigations. Even these figures are, it must be stated, a little defective. For instance, Adam has himself admitted that several inaccuracies, tending to underestimation, had crept into his statistics. Secondly, education was found to be greatly decaying at the time of Adam's enquiries, and there is reason to suppose that had Adam's enquiries been pursued in Bengal at an earlier period or in a part of India which had been under a more settled administration than Bengal, the picture of indigenous education shown in them would certainly have been much better. But this is an idle speculation. We shall have to accept Adam as our best guide on the subject.

6. Adam submitted three reports in all. The first of these is a mere digest of the previous records available on the subject and need not detain us here. The second

gives the results of Adam's enquiries in the Thana of Nattor in the district of Rajshahi. Its main interest lies in Adam's excellent descriptions of local conditions and indigenous institutions which are simply a mine of information. He describes the methods of teaching in indigenous elementary schools, in Persian and Arabic schools, and in Sanskrit schools; he gives a vivid picture of domestic instruction as it was carried on in those days; he touchingly pictures the utter absence of female education and speaks of a superstitious belief that a woman who learnt to read and write would soon lose her husband—a belief that mostly restricted this knowledge only to widows who had already lost their husbands or to courtesans who had no husbands to lose. The report makes very good reading and a student of educational history can hardly afford to miss it.

7. It is the third report of Adam that contains the vast statistical material which has become the basis of an interesting controversy. When Gandhiji had been to London in connection with the Round Table Conference, he made a speech stating that India was more illiterate at the present time than it was fifty or a hundred years ago. This remark naturally stung the smug Englishman who has deceived himself into the belief that his rule in India has been a divine dispensation, a blessing without parallel. Sir Philip Hartog who has had a distinguished career in India decided to prove that Gandhiji's statement was wrong. He did so in his book "Some Aspects of Indian Education, Past and Present", and has now requested Gandhiji, as a lover of truth, to withdraw his statement. But Indians have also taken cudgels and Mr. A. N. Basu of the Calcutta University and, more particularly, Mr. R. V. Parulekar have given considered replies and proved that Gandhiji is right. Sir Philip has recently

referred to the subject again and, in common parlance, the controversy is still 'hot'.

8. Curiously enough, both the sides take their stand on the reports of Adam only and come to different conclusions. The questions at issue are the following :

(i) Adam has made a statement in his first report that almost every village in Bengal had a school or that there were about one lakh schools in Bengal which then had about one lakh and a half of villages.

Is this statement justified by Adam's own investigations?

(ii) Comparing the literacy as estimated by Adam and as given by the census reports of modern times, do we find that India is 'more illiterate' to-day than it was a hundred years ago?

On the first issue, there is a difference of opinion regarding the term 'school'. Sir Philip interprets the word in its modern and formal sense and comes to the conclusion that Adam's statement is a 'myth' or a 'legend'. The other side insists that the word 'school' included, in those days, schools of a formal type *as well as* a centre of domestic instruction where the father or a paid tutor taught the children of the family, very often with some others of the neighbourhood. Adam himself includes such centres of instruction under the generic term 'school'—he calls them 'private schools' as against the formal schools which he designates as 'public schools'. If this view is accepted—it cannot but be—the statement of Adam would be substantially correct. In fact, Sir Philip finds it hard to explain why Adam himself did not correct his own earlier statement, and why the legend of

one lakh schools has persisted in official and non-official circles alike. He tries to argue that Adam could not sum up his statistics clearly or that myths are indestructible. Obviously, it does not suit his thesis to accept the more plausible suggestion that Adam did not contradict himself because this man who is described by Sir Philip himself as being 'honest as a day' found nothing to make him change his views and that the legend of a lakh of schools has lived for the simple reason that it was not a legend.

Regarding the second issue, the differences of opinion centre round the definition of literacy. Adam took a census of 'instructed adults' whom he divided into six categories. The last of these categories was designated as 'Adults who can merely decipher or sign their names'. Sir Philip excludes these adults from his calculations because he believes in the modern Indian definition of literacy viz. a capacity to read a letter and write a reply to it. The other side challenges this view and holds that standards of literacy in eighteenth-thirties, when books were few and newspapers almost non-existent, must be different from what they are to-day, that it is an anachronism to foist a standard of this time on the calculations of a century ago, and that these adults must be considered literate because Adam himself has done so. Secondly, it is pointed out that the goal in mass education is not a fixed point, and that it is continuously receding farther on account of the increase of population. Hence it is easy to see that a mere increase in the percentage of literacy is not equivalent to progress; that an increase of literacy is nothing if it does not exceed the growth of population; and that the increase in the percentage of literacy can be so gradual that, in spite of it, it would be nearer the truth to say that the nation

concerned has grown 'more illiterate'. For instance, take the following statistics for Bombay Province :

	1854	1941
Total Population	1,14,00,000	2,09,00,000
Literacy Percentage	6.0	19.5
(I have assumed the figure from Bengal .		
No. of Literates	6,84,000	40,68,000
No. of Illiterates	1,07,16,000	1,68,32,000

The work done is something, but that undone is simply vast. The province has travelled a little from its last halting place ; but in the meanwhile, the goal itself has receded so much in the background owing to the rise in population, that it is farther from its goal to-day than it ever was in the past. Who can deny that Bombay is ' more illiterate ' to-day than it was a hundred years ago ? If he does, he is certainly farther away from truth than one who accepts the thesis.

9. I need not pursue the topic further. Had this system of indigenous schools been accepted as the basis of reorganisation, had the indigenous schools been systematically assisted, encouraged and improved, the history of mass education in India would have been far different from the painful reading that it now is. But unfortunately for this country, things went entirely the wrong way.

10. Mountstuart Elphinstone had realised the importance of these schools and in his plans of educational reconstruction, had given the first place to the improvement of the indigenous schools and their multiplication. Similarly, Munro had proposed the improvement of indigenous schools. From his point of view, their multi-

plication was not an urgent problem because he believed that India was better educated than many a European country. But the proposals of these officers came to nothing. Munro died even before his proposals were sanctioned ; and Elphinstone could not achieve anything, mainly because of the opposition of Warden.

11. The idea was taken up by Adam who submitted a detailed scheme for the improvement of indigenous schools in the second part of his third report. Adam's main proposals were two : Firstly, he held the view that the downward filtration theory must be abandoned ; and secondly, he felt that any educational system that might be devised for India must assume, for its foundation, the existing educational institutions of the country which had come down from times immemorial and were, for that reason, more adapted to its social and economic conditions than any plants of foreign extraction. It is evident, however, that such views were made of too stern a stuff to be digested by the General Committee of Public Instruction for Bengal, which believed in the spread of western knowledge through the medium of English. When Adam's report came up before it, for further action, the Committee simply brushed it aside. Macaulay who, for some mysterious reason, had not signed the original order appointing Adam for holding the enquiry, now came forward and said that Adam's plans were thoroughly impracticable. The papers went up to the Governor-General, it was Lord Auckland, who played for time and postponed giving any decision. Ultimately, nothing came out of the proposals and Adam who had left India a little earlier never returned.

12. The first official to take up Adam's ideas was a Lieutenant-Governor of the N. W. Province—Mr. Thoma-

son—whose scheme of encouraging indigenous schools was based substantially on Adam's proposals and has come to be known in history as *Thomason's Plan*. It was introduced in eight districts of the N. W. Province as an experimental measure, and tried for a time. It was this scheme that was praised highly by the Despatch of 1854 which spoke of the need of giving 'wise encouragement' to the indigenous schools and recommended to the Provincial Governments to adopt Thomason's Plan. Moreover, the Despatch also spoke of the payments of grant-in-aid to private enterprise—a proposal that necessarily included the indigenous schools also. Sir Philip Hartog, therefore, points out, and he is perfectly justified in his assertion, that the proposals of Adam were covered, and more than covered by the Despatch of 1854.

13. But what Sir Philip does not point out is the fact that these recommendations of the Despatch were never carried out by the newly created Departments of Public Instruction. Indians are now quite trained to distinguish between the grandiloquent declarations of policy in blue and white and all sorts of coloured papers on the one hand, and the actual administration of the bureaucratic steel frame on the other. Thomason's Plan was very soon abandoned even in the North Western Province in favour of the Halkabandi schools which came to be established under the direct control of the Department and which soon became very popular. It was not adopted in any other province. Rules for the payment of grant-in-aid to private primary schools were not framed in any province, except Bengal, where also, the departmental officers reported that the grant-in-aid rules were unsuitable for the indigenous schools. And yet, the Despatch of 1859 said that the grant-in-aid system had failed in respect of primary education, that local cesses or rates should be im-

posed, and that, out of their proceeds, primary schools should be established under the direct management of the Education Department! A more hasty and unjustifiable decision can hardly be imagined.

14. Between 1859 and 1882, cesses or rates for local purposes (of which education was one) were imposed in all provinces (except Bengal) and a part of the proceeds was devoted to primary education. In Bengal, a large grant for primary education was sanctioned by Sir George Campbell and utilized in encouraging indigenous schools. In Madras also, most of the cess funds devoted to primary education were utilized for the same purpose. But barring these two provinces, no other province adopted the policy of assisting indigenous schools.

15. The Indian Education Commission studied the problem of indigenous schools very carefully and recommended that every possible encouragement should be given to them. But the officers of the Department did not alter their attitude in any manner and the neglect of indigenous schools went on as before. I might as well quote here a passage from the " History and Prospect of British Education in India " by F. W. Thomas :

" We estimated that in 1820 when the English system was but a drop in the ocean, about one in ten Hindu boys of the school-age was receiving instruction in schools of native origin and management. If that proportion were still maintained, there would, in 1881-82, have been, out of 254 million people of India (on Thomas Munro's rough calculation), 1,400,000 boys receiving the same training. The State inquiry conducted in that year revealed as the actual number 350,000 or just one-fourth of what we should have anticipated. And though we cannot regard this total as complete, it is evident how largely native

education has suffered from the State competition and that what was originally by far the more extensive system had now taken the second place."

"But what had become of the missing schools? They had disappeared in two different ways, by absorption and by extinction. In the north-west, Mr. Thomason's Tahsil and Halkabandi schools were not intended to rival the indigenous classes. But it was not long before the work of destruction began and the Director had frequent occasion for jubilation over the closing of now 600 and now 700 of these in the course of a year."

The result of such a policy can be easily anticipated. The indigenous schools rapidly died out either on account of the contemptuous neglect of the officials, or on account of the misguided, though well-meant, attempts at 'improvement' which generally involved destruction. When an agency backed up by Government funds and official status is left free to compete with private effort, the result is always disastrous for the latter. This is all the more so when the gulf between officials and private entrepreneurs is widened, as it was in India, by differences in colour, race, religion, traditions, and political status. It is hardly to be wondered, therefore, that the problem of indigenous schools ceased to exist by the close of the nineteenth century. A few schools continued to struggle on, of course, as unrecognised institutions; but they are hardly of any consequence. It is true that this work of shattering to bits 'the sorry scheme' of indigenous schools was followed, on the part of the education departments, by the creation of state-managed primary schools which were 'nearer to their heart's desire.' But these schools could not make up the loss caused by the disappearance of indigenous schools and the

percentage of literacy as given by the census of 1901 was even less than that revealed by Adam's statistics.

16. It is to be noted that although this policy is painful, it is not surprising. In fact, the psychological background of this era was extremely favourable for its adoption. I have already stated that the Englishmen of the later Victorian era were extremely self-complacent. This made them commit the grievous error of thinking that it was their task to *create* an educational system in India. They forgot that India was not like the land of the Swahili people in Africa and they made no allowance for the fact that this vast continent had a long cultural history of more than five thousand years. They did not realise that their energies would be more profitably employed in developing existing institutions and in modernising them. On the other hand, the Indians of this era were dazzled by their contact with the Western Civilization into believing that it was flawless; they too committed the grievous error of thinking that they could at once forget all their past by a mere desire to do so; and they were led to conclude that Westernisation of Indian life and thought was the best ideal for them to pursue. One is often surprised at the extent to which the Indians of this era were denationalised. They considered it a pride to speak in English; they spoke and wrote to their own countrymen in English; they dressed and tried to live in English style; and what not. In short, they showed clearly that they had not been able to digest an alien and exotic culture. They were poor specimens as sons of Mother India although they were undoubtedly a fulfilment of Macaulay's ideal in education. It is easy to see that between the smug officials who were out to impose their institutions on this country and such Indians in 'blood and colour' who simply craved to be thus imposed upon, the in-

digenous system of education had no room to exist. This is, of course, a mere explanation of the event. It cannot excuse the dire consequences that followed it.

17. The disappearance of the indigenous school left only one educational system in the field viz. the modern system whose object was the spread of western knowledge and science, preferably through the medium of English. Here, it is necessary to clear up a common misunderstanding. It is generally observed that Macaulay is responsible for the use of English as a medium of instruction which, it may be incidentally observed, was the most distinctive feature of the educational system during this period. I cannot subscribe to this view. Macaulay was concerned only with the adoption of English as a medium of instruction *in the first instance* and one can understand his error because he assumed, on the unanimous statement of local officials, that the modern Indian languages could not be so used. What has injured Indian education is not the *first* adoption of English as a medium of instruction, when no Indian language was believed to be capable of performing this function, but its *continuance as medium of instruction* for nearly a century even after the capacity of Indian languages to be used as media of instruction was fully demonstrated. Who is responsible for this result? Who is responsible for setting aside the clear direction given by the Despatch of 1854, that the modern Indian languages should be assiduously cultivated? Who is responsible for the neglect of the direction given by the same despatch that both English and the modern Indian languages should be used as the media of instruction at the secondary stage? Not Macaulay, evidently. I am of opinion that the dominance of English in the new system of education was due to two reasons: Firstly, an Imperialist will always impose his language on the ruled, because such imposition creates

mental chains of slavery which are the most powerful means of holding a people in perpetual bondage. Secondly, the 'political expediency' of teaching English to Indians was so patent to every British official that he clung to the statement of Macaulay for an unjustifiably long time. The great exponent of this view was Sir Erskine Perry, the president of the Bombay Board of Education. The view of this school of thought may be summarised as under:

1. If Englishmen are to rule in India, there must be *some channel of communication* between the ruler and the ruled.
2. This channel can be created by teaching modern Indian languages to Englishmen or by teaching English to Indians.
3. It is very costly to teach modern Indian languages to Englishmen while it is far cheaper to teach English to Indians. Secondly, it is easier to teach English to fifty Indians than to teach a modern Indian language to one Englishman.

Ergo, The grand object of the educational system in India should be the teaching of English to Indians.

It was this philosophy of life that was most responsible for the dominance of English in Indian education and it reminds me of the following interesting conversation from *Maid Marian*:

"Why are laws made?"

For the profit of somebody.

Of whom?"

Of him who makes them first, and of others, as it may happen."

18. The workers in this new system of education can be divided into three groups: Missionaries, Government Officials, and Indians. Of these, the missionaries had made the most head-way and, in 1854, they conducted a large majority of the non-indigenous primary schools and about half the schools for teaching English. The institutions under the direct management of the Education Department came next and Indian private enterprise occupied the lowest place. Prior to 1854, Indians had mostly confined their activities to collection of funds for education. They had not yet taken to conducting English schools, nor were they supposed to be competent to do so. For instance, in Bombay a 'high school' was defined as a school of which the Head Master was European. As for colleges, the idea that an Indian could be the Principal of a college would have then appeared to be simply preposterous.

19. The Missionaries had been led to entertain great hopes from the Despatch of 1854. It had made them look forward to rapid expansion of missionary enterprise with the help of a liberal financial assistance under the grant-in-aid system, and they even visualised a time when Government would withdraw in their favour, and when the entire educational system of the country would be provided by mission schools. But as Burns tells us—

'The best laid scheme of mice and men
Gang aft agley.'

And the rosy dreams initiated by the Despatch of 1854 were rudely broken within the next few years.

20. In 1858, the Church Missionary Society submitted a memorial to Queen Victoria, praying—

"1. That the existing policy will be no longer professed or maintained, but that, as it is the belief of your Majesty and of this Christian nation that the adoption of the Christian religion, upon an intelligent conviction of its truth, will be an incalculable benefit to the natives of India, the countenance and aid of Government will be given to any legitimate measures for bringing that religion under their notice and investigation.

"2. That since the Government, in addition to maintaining its own educational establishments, provides grants-in-aid to all other schools which provide a prescribed amount of secular knowledge.....the Bible will be introduced into the system of education in all the Government schools and colleges, as the only standard of moral rectitude, and the source of those Christian principles upon which your Majesty's Government is to be conducted."

But the disturbances of 1857 had already created a reaction in favour of religious neutrality and the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 gave an assurance to the Indian people that Government would not interfere with their religions. This was the first disappointment to the Missionaries, the beginning of the end.

21. Between 1858 and 1882, the officials of the Education Department came in continual conflict with the Missionary Workers and the situation created was so awkward that the missionaries had to face one set of difficulties while working within the system and another while working without it. On the one hand, they had to suffer numberless pin-pricks and humiliations while working as part of the official machine. For instance, the policy of the Education Department was that of competition with missionary enterprise rather than of encouragement and assistance; there was a great multiplication of Government

schools between 1854 and 1882 and the withdrawal from the educational field which the Despatch of 1854 had loudly talked about never materialised; secondly, several officers of Government were either 'non-Christian Brahmins' or 'Englishmen indifferent to religion,'—neither of whom had an enthusiasm for missionary enterprise—and the missionaries complained that they did not receive proper treatment at the hands of these officers; and thirdly, long and bitter controversies arose over the question of text-books because Government Officers insisted on uniformity while the missionaries demanded freedom to use their own books. These and other difficulties led the missionaries to think that the alliance between Government and missionary enterprise was 'unholy' and that the stronger partner—the State—exploited the Weaker partner for its own ends. On the other hand, it was almost impossible to work outside the official system. For instance, take the following experience of one missionary body:

"The Basle Missionary Society after a short-lived enthusiasm for the new Government scheme, which was shared at that time by nearly all the Societies, was the first to take action along these lines. In 1860 it severed its connection with the Government system, and reorganised its schools along its own lines. The results were overwhelming. On entering upon this new policy the Basle Society had hoped, perhaps in too sanguine a fashion, to gain possession of the whole school system in the provinces where it laboured. But instead of this the Government wrested from them the direction of all things educational, even in the midst of their main spheres of activity, Kanara and Malbar. First of all the English school at Cannanore had to be given up because the Government had erected a similar one in the place (1861). Then at the English school in Kanara there were not enough missionaries who,

in addition to the ordinary school subjects, were sufficiently masters of English language and literature to satisfy the demands of the Government for a provincial school of this type. The English school at Calicut was simply crushed out of existence, owing to an elaborate school plant set down by the Government in the immediate neighbourhood. In the native schools such thorough-going reforms were insisted upon, that of 1450 scholars in 1862, only 648 remained in 1866. In 1867 the missionaries sent an urgent request to the Missionary Committee asking for re-union with the Government educational system, and the committee complied, though with heavy hearts, in order that the missionaries might not be driven to the wall, and robbed of all influence upon the rising generation. Thus an educational scheme apart from that of the Government was proved an impossibility; against such rivalry it was unable to hold one's own*."

22. It was the experiences of this type that made the missionaries start an agitation, both in England and India, that they had to face a bad competition with Government enterprise and that missionary efforts were even threatened with extinction! They also alleged that Government educational institutions were 'godless' and 'irreligious' and led to a disruption of social life, and so on. The upshot of the whole agitation was the appointment of the Indian Education Commission in 1882 to review the whole system of education in India.

23. One of the main problems that the Indian Education Commission had to solve was to determine the place of missionary enterprise in Indian Education. The commission gave a very careful thought to the question and unanimously made the following recommendations:

* Richter: History of Missions in India. Pp. 312-13.

" 520. *The Position of Missionary Enterprise in Education.* In the point of view in which we are at present considering the question, missionary institutions hold an intermediate position between those managed by the Department and those managed by the people for themselves. On the one hand, they are the outcome of private effort, but on the other they are not strictly local; nor will encouragement to them directly foster those habits of self-reliance and combination for purpose of public utility which it is one of the objects of the grant-in-aid system to develop. Missionary institutions may serve the great purpose of showing what private effort can accomplish, and thus of inducing other agencies to come forward. They should be allowed to follow their own independent course under the general supervision of the State; and so long as there are room and need for every variety of agency in the field of education, they should receive all the encouragement and aid that private effort can legitimately claim. But it must not be forgotten that the private effort which it is mainly intended to evoke is that of the people themselves. Natives of India must constitute the most important of all agencies if educational means are ever to be co-extensive with educational wants. Other agencies may hold a prominent place for a time, and may always find some place in a system in which great variety is on every ground desirable. But the higher education of the country will not be on a basis that can be regarded as permanent or safe, nor will it receive the wide extension that is needed, until the larger part of it at all events is provided and managed by the people of the country for themselves."

This momentous decision sealed a controversy of long standing and decided that missionary enterprise would, at best, occupy only a subordinate position in the field of Indian education.

24. This recommendation of the Commission was the second disappointment to the missionaries. Moreover, the early dreams that the spread of English education would be inevitably followed by conversions to Christianity never materialised. The educated Indians became free-thinkers, or rose above conventional Hindu or Muslim customs to the realisation of the real nature of their great religions and became reformers of their own society. In short, all kinds of spiritual results followed except the one that was expected most—conversion to Christianity. This was the third and perhaps the greatest of the disappointments to missionary enterprise.

25. In the wake of these disappointments, there arose two great difficulties that considerably hindered the growth of missionary enterprise. The first was the expansion of Indian private enterprise to which I shall refer again later on. Whatever arguments the missionaries might have had for preferring mission schools to Government institutions, they had no basis on which to contend that their institutions deserved a preference over those conducted by Indians themselves. Secondly, a party arose among the missionaries themselves which held that missionaries should restrict their educational activities in India. This is how Richter puts forward the view of this Party:

"Now whether is it better, from a missionary point of view, to limit mission school education to the needs of the native Christian community, or to use the large Government grants as a lever by which schools may be so developed as to give missionaries a commanding influence over the scholars who pass through them? Mark well! The point at issue is not whether missions should keep up sufficient schools to meet the needs of the native Chris-

tian community. That is a matter on which there has never been any serious difference of opinion. The question is, whether missions should establish elementary and secondary schools for the non-Christian youth of India in order through them to disseminate Christian knowledge amongst the heathen masses of the people. No branch of mission work has caused such heated debate as this of schools for heathen children. At the Decennial Missionary Conferences at Allahabad in 1872, at Calcutta in 1882, at Bombay in 1892, and at the South India Conference at Bangalore in 1879, it invariably led to animated and often to elaborate discussion. It was of special moment that the great Missionary Secretary of the American Board, Rufus Anderson, and his entire Society, and along with them the English Baptist Missionary Society, should cast their entire weight into the balance against the maintenance of an extensive system of schools for heathen children. What arguments did these opponents advance? "School teaching is not missionary work." "It is no duty of the home churches at their own cost to spread higher education among any people whatsoever, save in so far as their immediate *raison d'être*, the propagation of the gospel, is advanced thereby. Missions have neither a call nor a mandate to teach English literature, history, mathematics, or natural science. The preaching of the gospel to the heathen and the exercise of pastoral care over the native churches is so clearly the head and front of all missionary labour that everything must be considered as pure *αλλοτριον* which does not directly further this end. Any union between the State and Missions can only be to the detriment of the latter; it is used by the stronger partner, the State, simply as an auxiliary to the attainment of its own ends, some of which are alien to the objects of missions, and some of which are indeed antagonistic to those objects. The inspection of mission

schools by heathen inspectors, the introduction of textbooks utterly incompatible with the stand-point of missions, the regulations with regard to the teaching staff, school buildings, the school inventory, school hours, etc., place missions at the mercy or the caprice of their opponents. Besides, the whole thing is like a screw with an endless worm; at one time an order will be issued making all religious instruction optional, and only to be given out of ordinary school hours (Educational Dispatch, 1885, in the North-Western Provinces, withdrawn after pressure from missionary circles); at another, it will be decreed that all the subjects that are under Government inspection must be taught during the first five hours of every day, whilst religious teaching must, if at all be taken during a sixth hour, when all the strength and power of attention on the part of the children is exhausted (Travancore, 1902). It is a delusion and a snare, in an educational system the whole efforts of which are directed towards examination drill and towards the acquirement by the scholars of a parrot-like facility in chattering English, for missionaries to hope to accomplish anything of value in imparting Christian knowledge—a subject that is of no use in the examination. The scholars tolerate the period set apart for Christian religious teaching, often unwillingly, making the best of it as a kind of bad bargain because they have a better chance of passing the State examinations in a mission school, or because the fees of the mission school are lower than those of the competing Government establishment. But it is unworthy of missions to use good teaching in secular subjects for an examination as a decoy by which to entice, for purposes of religious instruction, that portion of the youth of the country which hungers after knowledge. And the results of mission schools, as regards the number of baptisms, bear no sort of com-

parison with the means and strength employed; many mission schools are unable to record one case of baptism in an entire decade. And further, what could this elite of highly trained missionaries, who alone can be employed in educational mission work, in that case accomplish along the lines of direct missionary work? Precisely the most gifted amongst them are confined to close and stuffy schoolrooms, and both intellectually and spiritually are becoming atrophied under the mechanical school grind, whilst away outside, far across the thickly populated tracts of land, millions are dying without having once heard the good tidings of great joy!"*

26. All these considerations effectively checked any large scale expansion of the educational activities of the missionaries. They now decided to maintain a few efficient educational institutions—primarily for Indian Christians although open to all castes and communities—and turned their attention to such fields as have not yet attracted Indian workers viz. social and other work among the aboriginal and Hill Tribes etc.

27. With the restriction of missionary enterprise, the responsibility of providing for the educational needs of the country fell upon the Education Department and the Indians themselves. On financial grounds, the policy of Government was never favourable to any large expansion of educational institutions directly managed by the Department. On the other hand, the officials of the Department were always eager to multiply departmental institutions because they believed that such institutions are extremely efficient. The pendulum of policy has, therefore, swung this way and that from time to time; but on the whole, Government have had their way.

* Richter: History of Missions in India. Pp. 313-15

28. As I stated before, Government talked of withdrawal even as early as, 1854. It was rather an absurd statement because 'withdrawal' implies an earlier entry, and the position in 1854 can at best be described as standing on the threshold. But in the years between 1858 and 1882, the Department could multiply considerably the schools under their control. The following table compares the departmental institutions in 1855 with those in 1882:

	Institu- tions	1855 Scholars	Institu- tions	1882 Scholars
Colleges English and Oriental	15	3,246	38	4,252
Professional Colleges	13	912	52	527
Secondary Schools	169	18,335	1,363	44,605
Primary Schools	1202	40,041	13,882	6,81,835
Normal Schools	7	197	83	2,814
Total	1406	62,731	15,418	7,34,033

The figures show a very remarkable rise in institutions directly managed by the Department, particularly in the field of primary education. This expansion is not to be regretted. In those days, Indian private enterprise had not yet developed; missionary schools were not encouraged, as we have seen; and it was, therefore, fortunate that departmental schools expanded and tried to keep pace with the growth of the public demand for education.

Another interesting thing to note is this: The Government expenditure on education was about Rs. 10 lakhs in 1854-55. It increased to about Rs. 21 lakhs in 1856-57, and the President of the Board of Control began to complain that it had increased too much and too suddenly. At such a time, the idea of levying cesses or rates for education that was put forward by the Despatch of 1859 came as a veritable boon. Government ceased to object to the expansion of departmental institutions because they were

maintained by new taxes and its own resources were not strained. Had it not been for the imposition of local cesses, it is doubtful whether Government would have permitted the department to expand its institutions to so large an extent.

29. The report of the Indian Education Commission marked a change in this policy—in fact, the whole educational history will show that periods of rapid expansion of official enterprise have generally alternated with those of comparative stagnation. The Indian Education Commission recommended that Government should withdraw from direct educational enterprise as soon as a suitable private agency came forward to do the work and that every encouragement should be given to private enterprise. This recommendation was prompted, not so much by a desire to economize Government expenditure as by the necessity of making every rupee go the longest way. The Commission was convinced that Government schools which were necessarily costlier would never be able to meet the educational requirements of a country like India whose poverty of purse was only equalled by the vastness of its child population. The Commission, therefore, felt that the best policy in education would be for Government to withdraw from direct educational enterprise and to utilize the money so saved, along with all the additional resources available, for the encouragement of private enterprise — particularly of the people themselves. But as later events showed, this policy was not adopted in toto. It is true that private enterprise was considerably encouraged; but Government institutions were not generally transferred to private bodies. The Commission itself had stated that these should not be transferred to missionaries and the officials of those days would not believe in the capacity of Indians to undertake and conduct departmental institutions in an efficient manner. On the other hand, depart-

mental institutions went on increasing, although at a slower rate than before, during the twenty years following the report of the Indian Education Commission. But limitations of finance acted as a powerful check on the expansion of departmental schools and, even in 1901-02, the number of such schools was comparatively small. As private enterprise had increased very substantially in the meanwhile, it is easy to see that departmental schools formed a small part only of the total volume of educational institutions in India.

30. You will have realised by now that the expansion of both Missionary and Government schools was restricted during the period under review. The logical consequence of these developments was that the growing educational demands of the people could only be met by private Indian enterprise. Indians had either to educate themselves or go without education and it is a significant fact of modern educational history that the Indians of this period rose to the occasion and played their part, nobly and well.

31. The motives that led to private Indian enterprise in education were mainly patriotic. Most of the educated Indians went in for the lucrative employment under Government. But there were a few who chose 'to scorn delights and live laborious days.' They were convinced that a regeneration of Indian national life could only take place through a widespread organisation of good modern education at a cost which Indians could afford. They could see that neither Government nor the Missionaries would ever be able to create an organisation of this type and hence they set themselves the task of creating it. History teems with instances of institutions organised by great men of this type. But I will mention only two: the Anglo-Oriental Mahomedan College at Aligarh and the New English School at Poona.

32. The first attempts of these pioneers were directed to collecting funds and to conducting schools and colleges under European Head Masters and Principals. This was necessary because, in those days, Indians were not considered to be fit to hold such posts. But it is easy to see that such a system can never be extended largely nor can its cost be made low enough to be within the reach of the average Indian. What the situation needed was a sacrifice on the part of Indians of undoubted ability and scholarship. If such persons would agree to live on a pittance and work in private institutions, Indian private enterprise could at once wipe out the stigma of inferiority that was attached to it and attain a dignity which it did not have before. Several Indians of this type came forward, and, for reasons of time, I shall mention only one of the earliest, Mr. (now Sir) R. P. Paranjpye. As a Senior Wrangler of the Cambridge University, he could have easily obtained a high post under Government. But when he chose to work as Principal of the Fergusson College, the talk of 'Inferior' Indian Principals was finally buried, at least in so far as the Province of Bombay is concerned. One finds it difficult to accept Sir Raghunath's politics; but his signal services to the cause of Indian private enterprise in modern education will ever command reverence.

33. I shall conclude this talk with a humble tribute to the workers in the cause of Indian Private Enterprise during this period. They satisfied the demand for education as well as created it. It was they who laid the foundation of modern national life in India. It is not possible to mention all of them, nor indeed even to know all of them. But we can follow Yeats and say that each one of them has "hid his face amid a crowd of stars."

Act The Third

(1901—1921)

DISILLUSIONMENT

1. During the latter half of the nineteenth century the Indian people were generally satisfied with British rule and with the modern educational system. Not that all was perfect and that there was no discordant note. The Indian National Congress had been established in 1885 and was developing a patriotic sentiment very rapidly. Here and there, some features of the educational system such as its neglect of the indigenous schools, modern Indian Languages, and vocational education was criticised. But on the whole, there was a feeling of satisfaction and progress, of complacent altruism on the part of British Officials and of enthusiastic gratitude on that of Indians.

2. The first two decades of the twentieth Century, however, were a *period of disillusionment* for all. For instance, the Officials were dissatisfied with the national awakening and the growing opposition to British Rule which educated Indians began to manifest. The general expectation of the Britisher was that Indians would be ever grateful and loyal to England for the blessings of education which she had conferred on them. If one reads the volumes of evidence recorded by Parliament at the renewal of the Company's Charter in 1833 and 1853, one finds that the probable results of the spread of education in India were often discussed. There was a school of thinkers which held that spread of education in India would lead to the downfall of the British Empire. These were opposed by two sets of arguments. The first was

to argue that it was the duty of England to educate India, even if the attempt was likely to result in the loss of India to the British Empire—the argument which men like Macaulay or Metcalfe used. But the average British Official took his stand on the other argument viz. that Indians would be grateful and loyal to England for the new educational system and that British Rule in India would be strengthened by the spread of education. This assumption was falsified by the spread of national sentiment and unrest among educated Indians. It is to be remembered that this was not due to any ingratitude on the part of Indians and had it been a question of education only, Indians would certainly have been even more grateful than was expected. But they had now realised that no amount of small mercies such as educational reforms would compensate for the loss of liberty and for the terrific economic exploitation that formed the inseparable concomitants of British Rule. The Official mind was naturally unable to appreciate this view-point and was led into the belief that the unrest among educated Indians was due to defective education, to a policy of *laissez faire* that had been adopted since the report of the Indian Education Commission, to the great multiplication of educational institutions under Indian private entrepreneurs with little or no control by Government.

3. This *political* background of the Official dissatisfaction with the educational system has to be carefully noted in order to understand the discussions of this period in their proper perspective. For instance, we find official spokesmen of this time referring to the lack of discipline among Indian students, to convict graduates, to the unsettling effects of Western education, and so forth. Lord Curzon spoke of the lack of character among Indians and the Government Resolution on Educational

Policy, dated 1913, suddenly stated that the goal of educational efforts was “formation of character” instead of “the spread of western knowledge and science” to which we had been accustomed for nearly eight decades. Much of this talk, it must be remembered, was *political and not educational*. It referred to the political agitation which educated Indians were carrying on, to the part which students were taking in national movements, and to the inability of school managers to control the political inclinations of their students. The attempts of the administrators of this period at the reform of the educational system were as politically motivated as those of Hastings or Duncan in laying its foundation.

4. The Indian people, on the other hand, were disillusioned to an even greater extent. To begin with, they would not accept now that “spread of Western knowledge and Science” ought to be the be-all and the end-all of the Indian educational system. Their nationalism rebelled against the racial arrogance of the white man. Unlike the men of the earlier period, they did not believe in the intrinsic superiority of Western Civilization. They were quick to realise the dissatisfaction which the West itself was expressing against its own civilization and agreed with the view that science had deluded the European into mistaking “comfort” for “civilization”. They no longer thought that the meeting between the West and the East was like that between beauty and beast; rather, they held the view that it was like a meeting between two sisters who had parted early—the one having married a philosopher and the other a scientist—and who had met after the lapse of several years to exchange views and compare notes, a meeting in which the experiences of each would enrich the other. Finally, the last vestige of glory of the Western Civilization was taken away by the great World

War (1914–18) which showed to all the world that the European, whatever his intellectual status, was no better than a savage at heart. Secondly, Indians got dissatisfied with the rate of expansion of education and a feeling began to gain ground that the spread of education had been too slow to be described as “progress”. The sudden rise of the Japanese power, especially after its victory in the Russo-Japanese war, opened the eyes of the people to what an Eastern country may achieve, and the comparison of Japan’s hart-like advance to India’s snail-pace increased the dissatisfaction all the more. Thirdly, various aspects of the system also came in for severe criticism. For instance, it was pointed out that the educational system was entirely divorced from national ideals. It did not train students in a patriotic feeling; on the other hand, it tried to train them in loyalty to the King and the Union Jack and scrupulously avoided a training of loyalty to Mother India. It did not train young men and women to the task of building up the social and economic life of the nation; on the other hand, it laid emphasis on a purely literary education and trained people to hardly anything beyond employment under Government. It neglected the modern Indian languages, was dominated by the study of English as a language and crushed under its use as a medium of instruction. It was top-heavy, because higher education was developed to a far larger extent than primary; and so on. I may easily prolong the list; but what I have said already is quite enough to show how the national mind of India was looking at the educational system during the period under review.

5. These and other defects of the educational system made Indians feel that a drastic reform was immediately needed and that Indians alone could carry it out. It had been realised by now that it was impossible for British

officials to identify themselves with the national aspirations of India and it needed no lengthy argument to show that a truly national system of education could never be built up by a bureaucracy which was generally indifferent and often hostile to national ambitions. Secondly, Indians had also realised that the two earlier fronts which they had opened in this war for *Indianisation* were not sufficient. The first was to organise private schools and colleges under Indian control. This method had its own advantages but the managers of recognised schools and colleges could never be able to create a national system of education as their freedom was greatly limited by departmental rules and regulations. The second front was that of demanding the Indianisation of the educational services. Although this demand was largely conceded in so far as the lower services were concerned, the keyposts continued to be held by Europeans. It was, therefore, argued that while the attack on these two fronts should continue as vigorously as before, it was necessary to open a third front by demanding a hand in the framing of the educational policy, in other words, a demand for the transfer of the control of education to Indian hands.

6. Throughout this period, therefore, the conflict was *mainly political* and only *partly educational*. The officials tried to obtain more and more control over education—especially over private i. e. Indian enterprise—and concentrated on the improvement of education rather than on its extension. Indians, on the other hand, demanded the power to be able to direct their own educational policy and generally advocated the rapid extension of education before any intensive experiments in qualitative improvement were undertaken. This conflict began first in university education, then came down to secondary education, and descended finally to primary education. I

shall now proceed to describe these three phases of the conflict one after the other.

7. Lord Curzon began his work of university reform by appointing a commission, known as the Indian Universities Commission, early in 1902. The report of the Commission is a lengthy and a technical document which need not detain us here. But I might briefly mention some of its important features. To begin with, the Commission was precluded from reporting on secondary education and as the problem of university reorganisation is intimately connected with the reform of secondary education, its study of the problem could not be thorough. Secondly, the Commission accepted the London University, as constituted by the Act of 1898, as the model for Indian Universities. This was not a happy choice. The Commission ought to have discussed the general and fundamental principles of university organisation, determined the type of university best suited to Indian conditions, and then suggested such transitional measures as would enable Indians to achieve the pre-determined goal in the shortest time. But unfortunately, the commission did not raise any such fundamental issues. It accepted the existing structure of affiliating universities as fundamentally sound and only suggested such extensions or alterations as it considered necessary. Thirdly, the Commission was very much pressed for time—Gokhale criticised the hurried manner in which it went round the country—because legislation regarding universities had to be put through at a very early date. It was, therefore natural that its report deals with *immediate* difficulties rather than with problems of *ultimate* importance. All things considered, the report of the Indian Universities Commission is very unsatisfactory from the educational point of view, although it was attacked on political rather than on educational grounds.

8. The recommendations of the Commission can be divided into five categories. Of these, the recommendations relating to curricula and the conditions of students' life were left over to be dealt with by the reorganised universities and the Indian universities Act of 1904 dealt with the remaining three groups viz. the reorganisation of University Government, the imposition of strict conditions for affiliation of colleges, and the undertaking of teaching work. The Act introduced several important reforms in these matters on the lines recommended by the Indian Universities Commission. Its preamble stated that the object of universities was, not only to hold examinations and confer degrees, but to conduct libraries, laboratories, and museums, to appoint University professors, and generally to undertake such teaching work as was necessary and possible. The size of the university senates was now limited to a maximum of 100 Fellows—senates under the Act of 1857 had grown very unwieldy—and the period of appointment of a senator was limited to five years instead of for life as before. The principle of election was given statutory recognition and a certain number of seats—20 at the three older Universities of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, and 15 at the two younger ones of Punjab and Allahabad—were thrown open by election to registered graduates and faculties. The syndicate was given statutory recognition and it was laid down that a definite portion of it should consist of university teachers. The Governor-General in Council was empowered to define territorial limits of the universities. The powers of Government in the matter of regulations to be framed by the universities were enlarged. And finally, strict conditions for affiliation of colleges were laid down; affiliation by the university was subjected to the sanction of Government; and provision for periodical inspection of affiliated colleges by the syndicate was also made.

9. Such were the provisions of the Indian Universities Act of 1904. *Prima Facie*, these appear to be changes in the right direction and one is a little surprised to find that these should have met with the stiffest opposition from Indians. Lord Curzon, whose earlier utterances on university reform had been enthusiastically welcomed, wondered why the Indian zeal for University reorganisation suddenly died out. But a closer study of the problem—for which the speeches of G. K. Gokhale form an excellent guide—will show that the conflict arose more on political than on educational grounds. *Indians grew suspicious of the motives of Government*, and if the facts are looked at from their point of view, this attitude will easily be seen to be justifiable. When Lord Curzon convened the conference of the Directors of Public Instruction at Simla, he invited Missionaries to attend it, but did not invite Indians. When the personnel of the Indian universities commission was announced, Missionaries were represented on it but no representation was given to Indian private enterprise. The evidence given before the Commission—a good deal of which was opposed to the pet theories of officials—was not published. These and similar events created a suspicion in the Indian mind that Missionaries and European Officials had joined hands to sabotage the spread of Indian private enterprise. The feeling was strengthened by the reduction in the size of the senate and the large number of seats reserved for nomination. It was believed that the main object of these reforms was to create a European majority in the University senates and, through the strict conditions of affiliation, to stem the rising tide of Indian private enterprise in higher education. Similarly, the tone of official report gave a still further support to this feeling of apprehension. For instance, the officials spoke of the “inefficiency” of non-government schools and later on

added that the mission schools were generally efficient. The only conclusion that could be drawn, therefore, was to regard all the strict measures of control which Government proposed to adopt as being directed against Indian private enterprise only. To one who can appreciate this background, the Indian opposition to the Act is easily intelligible.

10. The whole force of Indian opinion was, therefore, directed against two features of the Act. Firstly, it was pointed out that a mere enabling clause in the Act of incorporation is not enough to make it possible for a university to undertake teaching and research which need very large funds. It was, therefore, suggested that Government should not rest content with a pious hope that *some day, somebody would somehow* find the funds required for enabling *some* university to undertake *some* teaching functions; and it was argued that Government should make definite provision for substantial financial assistance to the Universities. This point was gained and Government promised to make a grant of Rs. 5 lakhs a year for five years beginning with 1904-5, a grant that was later on made permanent and even increased. Secondly, Indians fought against those aspects of the Act which threw more power in the hands of Government such as the power to nominate 80 p.c. of the Fellows, the power to alter or even make regulations under certain circumstances, the power to require approval to affiliation of colleges, etc. This charge was fundamentally correct and the Sadler Commission observed that the Indian Universities were most Governmentalised Universities in the whole world. On this issue, however, Indians lost throughout and Government could carry through the Act almost in the same form in which it was originally planned. But the struggle over it was the first battle in a war for the control of

Indian education—a war that ended in a victory for Indians in 1921 when the Department of Education was transferred, under a few reservations, to the control of an Indian Minister responsible to a legislature with a large elected majority.

11. I shall now turn to the Government attempts to assume a larger control over secondary schools. The new policy of Government in this regard has been clearly stated in the Government Resolutions of 1904 and 1913. To begin with, two important departures were made from the policy which was in vogue since the report of the Indian Education Commission. Firstly, the idea that Government should completely withdraw from the field of direct educational enterprise was definitely abandoned. In its place, a new theory of maintaining Government institutions as “models” to private enterprise was evolved. Government no longer had any faith in the intrinsic superiority of private over state effort, but continued to encourage the former merely on grounds of finance and preference for an established system. Secondly, ever since 1854, the Education Departments attached conditions for grant of aid and had, in practice, always laid down fairly complete rules for the good management of schools, as a condition of their receiving aid from public funds. The enactment of such rules had been effective where the inspecting staff was equal to the task, the amount of aid was worth having, and where the schools had resources from which to incur the necessary expense, and it had been ineffective where these three conditions were not satisfied. But in the unaided schools there had, before the period under review, hardly been even a theoretical assertion of any control, nor had any practical means been devised by which such a control could be exercised. The resolution issued by Lord Curzon’s Govern-

ment in March 1904 asserted, for the first time, that “whether our secondary schools are managed by public authorities or private persons and whether they receive aid from Government or not, the Government is bound in the interest of the community to see that the education provided in them is sound”.

12. A great drive for the control and reform of secondary schools began, therefore, in 1904. Strict conditions—which were generally modelled on the conditions for the affiliation of colleges—were attached to the “recognition” of secondary schools, instead of the payment of “grant-in-aid”. Transfers of pupils from unrecognised to recognised schools were forbidden; control over secondary schools by the university was tightened; departmental inspecting staff was strengthened; the amount of grant-in-aid was increased so as to make it worth having; and programmes of training secondary teachers were largely taken up. The result was that, within a few years, most of the private secondary schools were brought effectively under the control of the Department.

13. The non-official reactions to this attempt at control and reform deserve special notice. Broadly speaking, Indians did not object to the more rigid control which the Department tried to exercise over secondary schools, although the departmental rules were occasionally found to be too irritating by managers of status and independent thought. Such control was generally necessary and it was felt that, if the major demand of Indians to control the department itself were conceded, there would be nothing wrong in the additional control which the department had now come to possess over secondary schools. But there was a keen difference of opinion between official and

nationalist opinion regarding the methods of reform. For instance, the official opinion was keen on improving the standard of English which, it was said, was rapidly deteriorating. It tried a number of remedies for this purpose, such as having trained teachers for English, adopting improved methods of teaching, giving more time to English in the time-table, and so on. The national opinion, on the other hand, protested against the dominance of English and against its continued use as a medium of instruction and examination. It held the view that an emphasis on the improvement of the standard of English was simply wasting the energies of students and advocated that all education should be imparted through the mother-tongue. Similarly, the non-official opinion did not approve of the manner in which secondary education was financed. While admitting that Government expenditure on education had increased considerably between 1901 and 1921, it was pointed out that a large part of the additional revenues received by Government on account of the world economic boom of this period was spent on the Military Department and that education obtained only a small share in comparison. Even the small share that it obtained was not wisely used, because a good deal of it was spent in maintaining the white elephant of a few "model" institutions of Government and private schools, which educated the bulk of the pupils, obtained only a small part of the total Government expenditure on education. It is not necessary to multiply such instances. The two I have given will show how wide the gulf was between the official and the Indian points of view.

14. I shall now come to the conflict in the field of primary education which began with the attempt of Gokhale to introduce compulsory elementary education in India. On 18th March 1910, he moved a resolution in

the Imperial Legislative Council recommending that a beginning be made in the direction of free and compulsory education and that a mixed commission of officials and non-officials be appointed to frame definite proposals. The resolution was withdrawn on an assurance from the Government that the whole problem would be fully investigated. A year later, Gokhale introduced his bill for the introduction of compulsory elementary education which incorporated most of the suggestions which he had put forward while speaking on his resolution of 1910.

15. This bill had three important features which deserve special notice. Firstly, it did not demand the immediate introduction of compulsory education. It only said that Municipalities and Local Boards should be *permitted* to do so under certain conditions that were to be prescribed under the Act. It was the view of Gokhale that the initiative in the matter of compulsion should be left to local self-government institutions. As he observed :—

"My Lord, it is urged by those who are opposed to the introduction of compulsion in this country that though the Gaekwar, as an Indian Prince, could force compulsion on his subjects without serious opposition, the British Government, as a foreign Government, cannot afford to risk the unpopularity which the measure will entail. Personally I do not think that the fear which lies behind this view is justified, because the Government in Ceylon is as much a foreign Government as that in India, and in Ceylon the authorities have not shrunk from the introduction of compulsion. But to meet this objection, I am quite willing that the first steps in the direction of compulsion should be taken by our Local Bodies, which reproduce in British territory conditions similar to those which obtain in Feudatory States".

Secondly, Gokhale proposed that the cost of compulsion should be shared by Government and local bodies in the ratio of two to one. I may quote his own words:

“It is obvious that the whole working of this Bill must depend in the first instance upon the share, which the Government is prepared to bear, of the cost of compulsory education, wherever it is introduced. I find that in England the Parliamentary grant covers about two-thirds of the total expenditure on elementary schools. In Scotland it amounts to more than that proportion, whereas in Ireland it meets practically the whole cost. I think we are entitled to ask that in India at least two-thirds of the new expenditure should be borne by the state”.

Thirdly, Gokhale did not contemplate the universal introduction of compulsion at one stroke. He was prepared to advance slowly. He suggested that compulsion should be introduced in such areas only where the ground was quite prepared for such an experiment; secondly, he suggested that compulsion may first be introduced in the case of boys only and later on extended to girls when public opinion was sufficiently awakened; and lastly, he proposed to begin with a compulsory education of four years only, with mere attainment of literacy, and to postpone the lengthening of the age-period of compulsion to a time when a more liberal provision of funds would become possible. As he himself observed, his bill was essentially a cautious one. If any thing, it erred too much on the side of caution.

16. This demand, moderate as it seems to-day, simply staggered the bureaucrats of that time. To them, Gokhale appeared to be little short of a revolutionary. They still held the view that education was a charity shown by the English nation to India, and could not yet feel that mass

education was a *duty* which they had ignored too long—a failure for which they would have to answer before the Seat of Judgment. They were willing to expand primary education on a voluntary basis. That is to say, they were content to move onwards at *some* speed, to take delight in the mere idea of movement, and to leave it to time—perhaps astronomical time—to reach universal compulsion. They refused to commit themselves to a definite statement of the objective viz. universal compulsion, and many of them even believed it to be unattainable in India. They were absolutely unprepared to lay down a definite timetable of advance as Gokhale had suggested. Consequently, even the cautious bill of Gokhale was thrown out by the legislature by 38 votes to 13. The majority against the bill is not surprising because, at that time, the Imperial Legislative Council had a clear official majority which was further strengthened by the support of reactionary non-officials.

17. Fortunately for the country, the question did not end with this vote. Gokhale's efforts had lighted a torch that was not born for death and other workers were soon to arise and spread the light all over India. In the meanwhile, Government had to define its attitude towards mass education and this was done in the speech of His Majesty, dated 6th January 1912, and the Government Resolution on Educational Policy dated 21st February, 1913. His Majesty stated:

“It is my wish that there may be spread over the land a network of schools and colleges, from which will go forth loyal and manly and useful citizens, able to hold their own in industries and agriculture and all the vocations in life. And it is my wish, too, that the homes of my Indian subjects may be brightened and their labour

sweetened by the spread of knowledge with all that follows in its train, a higher level of thought, of comfort and of health. It is through education that my wish will be fulfilled, and the cause of education in India will ever be close to my heart”.

The Resolution of 1913 observed:

“The propositions that illiteracy must be broken down and that primary education has, in the present circumstances of India, a predominant claim upon the public funds represent accepted policy no longer open to discussion. For financial and administrative reasons of decisive weight the Government of India have refused to recognise the principle of compulsory education, but they desire the widest possible extension of primary education on a voluntary basis. As regards free elementary education the time has not yet arrived when it is practicable to dispense wholly with fees without injustice to the many villages which are waiting for the provision of schools”.

18. One wonders why the officials did not realise the contradiction between these two statements. His Majesty desired that the homes of his Indian subjects should be brightened by the spread of knowledge — a result which cannot be obtained without resorting to compulsion in some form or other. But the Government Resolution refuses to recognise the principle of compulsion “for financial and administrative reasons of decisive weight”. The only hypothesis on which one can reconcile these two different statements is to assume that our administrators looked upon the education of Indians as an object of charity and *not* as a duty. Charity has no goal, nor a minimum requirement. A duty has both.

19. In fact, if one considers the question seriously, one finds that the British Administrators have never look-

ed upon mass education in India as a sacred duty which they must fulfil. Here and there, in the vast course of history, we find a Macaulay or a Metcalfe uttering sentiments of duty; but these cannot be taken to represent the attitude of the administration. On the whole, one feels that British administration has systematically bartered education (with its consequent reward of employment under Government) in exchange for political loyalty. In the beginning, education was offered to the upper classes of society in order to win over their loyalty and to minimise the disaffection which was caused by the change of Government. When these classes became too advanced and politically conscious, Government transferred their love to the next lower strata—the intermediate communities. When, in their turn, these classes also became politically awakened, Government transferred their affections to the backward communities. The abandonment of the downward filtration theory, therefore, is not the result of sympathy for the less fortunate in life. It is a transfer of patronage to the politically unawakened sections of the community in order to divide and rule.

20. The foregoing account of the conflicts of this period shows how Government and Indian Nationalist opinion were coming to grips with one another. The major issue in the conflict was political, viz. the struggle to control educational policy. The minor issues were educational and referred to the dominance of English, the medium of instruction and the introduction of compulsory elementary education. The Government of India Act, 1919, transferred Education Department to the control of Indian Ministers, and resolved the political conflict. But the Educational conflicts still continued to wage, and I shall deal with their subsequent history in the next Act of this great drama.

Act The Fourth
(1921-37)

INDIANS AT THE HELM

1. From 1921 to 1937, Provincial Administration in India was carried on under a system known as "Dyarchy". According to this system, the sphere of the activities of a Provincial Government was divided into two parts—the *reserved* departments and the *transferred* departments. The reserved departments were to be administered by the Governor with the help of some executive councillors and he was to be responsible to the Government of India and the Secretary of State for their proper management. On the other hand, the transferred departments were to be managed by the Governor with the help of ministers who were responsible, not to the Government of India, but to the Provincial Legislature for the proper administration of their departments. This division of the Provincial Government into two halves earned the system the rather hated name of *dyarchy* and it was under this unusual form of political constitution that Indians found themselves at the helm of educational affairs.

2. It is not generally known that the officials did not yield in their struggle for power without a final and supreme effort. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report, on which the reforms of 1919 were based, had suggested that a department should be considered as fit for transfer to Indian Control (1) if it had attracted keen attention from Indians, (2) if it afforded great opportunities for social service, (3) if it stood most in need of development, and (4) if mistakes in its administration were not likely to be

serious and irremediable. The last clause provokes a smile ; but judged by these standards, there was an overwhelming case to transfer the Education Department to Indian hands. Our bureaucrats, however, could not simply think of it. When the question was referred to the Provincial Governments, it was only the Governments of Bombay and United Provinces that supported the transfer of education to Indian control. The action of the United Provinces Government is all the more laudable because the official Committee that advised the Government had expressed an opinion to the contrary. The Madras Government opposed the transfer in toto ; and all other Provincial Governments suggested that primary education should be transferred and higher education should be reserved. The Government of India held the same opinion. It recommended the transfer of primary education because it afforded the greatest scope for patriotic effort. But it thought that the transfer of secondary and higher education to "untried hands" would be tantamount to a "grave dereliction of duty"! The microscopic minority of Europeans and Anglo-Indians felt that their educational interests would be unsafe in Indian hands and claimed that their education should be excluded from the transferred departments. These attempts did not succeed especially because the reservation of higher education would have led to very serious discontent in India. But the orders that finally came to be passed attempted a compromise between all these view-points. Some subjects, such as the Education of Chiefs, were regarded as falling within the purview of the Government of India ; some other subjects, such as the Benares Hindu University, were declared to be transferred but subject to the authority of the Imperial Legislature ; and the education of Europeans and Anglo-Indians was declared to be a provincial but reserved subject. Education under dyarchy

became, therefore, a strange mixture of managements. It was "partly All-India, partly reserved, partly transferred with limitations and partly transferred without limitations". The very complexity of these divisions shows the difficulty with which a working compromise was arrived at between warring ideals.

3. In the same way, the difficulties of Indian Ministers are also generally ignored. To begin with, it must be remembered that the Indian Ministers had to work under a strange political constitution which had been foredoomed to failure. Secondly, they had not enough control over funds because finance was a reserved subject and the Ministers had generally to remain content with what little the reserved departments left for them. Thirdly, they had hardly any control over the Indian Educational Service whose members held all the keyposts in the Department throughout the period under review. A minister must have willing and ungrudging co-operation from the public services if his policy has to be successful. But owing to the great ideological differences between Indian and Official opinion to which I referred, a little while ago, the ministers were often unable to adopt a new policy or to carry out one in the teeth of official opposition. Their position was often like that of a lamp surrounded by a dark glass; and although all recruitment to the I. E. S. was discontinued in 1924, in deference to public agitation, a complete Indianisation of the educational services was not possible till about 1945. Fourthly, they had to work in a period of world economic depression. They began their task under financial clouds and hardly had they been a year or so in office when the need for retrenchment arose. Things improved slightly for some time; but then a great world economic depression began in 1930-31 and continued almost to the end of the

period under review. Programmes of educational expansion naturally need large additional funds and it was an unfortunate coincidence that Indian Ministers should be faced with economic difficulties in their first attempts to reorganise education. Be that as it may, these difficulties of Indian Ministers have to be kept in view in assessing their work. Otherwise, one is likely to be too harsh in criticising their failures.

4. With these preliminary remarks, let me turn to the events of this period. Beginning at the top, we find a great expansion of University education. In 1857, we had three Universities at Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. In 1882 and 1887, the Universities of Punjab and Allahabad respectively were constituted. The Benares Hindu and the Mysore Universities were incorporated in 1916. The Patna University was established in 1917 and the Osmania which is the one University that teaches through the medium of an Indian language viz. Urdu—was established in 1918. As soon as the report of the Calcutta University Commission was published, there began a period of creation of new universities and of reconstitution of old ones. Between 1919 and 1937 nine new Universities were created viz. Aligarh Muslim (1920), Lucknow (1920), Dacca (1921), Delhi (1922), Nagpur (1923), Andhra (1926), Agra (1927), Annamalai (1929) and Travancore (1937). The University of Madras was reconstituted in 1923, Bombay in 1928 and Patna in 1932. With the creation of the Agra University which took over its work of affiliation, Allahabad became a purely teaching University in 1927. The number of faculties in Indian Universities was five in 1857, ten in 1921-22 and thirteen in 1936-37. The number of Collegiate institutions connected with Indian Universities (including University departments) was 257 in 1921-22 and it rose to 446 in 1936-37. The number of students at the Universities

was 66,358 in 1921-22 and it rose to 1,26,228 in 1936-37. Similarly, the period also witnessed a remarkable increase in the output of original research work in the Indian Universities due to institution of research degrees, provision of scholarships, and the undertaking of teaching work on a far larger scale than ever before. It is true that some of the activities narrated above were begun prior to the transfer of control. But even after due allowance is made for it the achievements of Indian Ministries would certainly be regarded as creditable.

5. In the field of secondary education, the main achievements were the abandoning of the compulsory use of English as a medium of examination at the Matriculation in all the subjects except English. As a natural result of this, the medium of instruction at the secondary stage became mostly English, and after nearly a hundred years of suffering, the wrong course adopted in 1835 was given up. The victory was great; but unfortunately, it could not be complete. English still continued to be the medium of examination in Government competitive examinations; its use as a medium at the University stage still made parents and school managers adopt it at the secondary stage also in order to make their children or students 'shine' in the top examinations in bi— or multi-lingual areas where provision for instruction in each local language could not be made, English had to be adopted as a medium of instruction as the only compromise possible between warring demands; the absence of a commonly accepted language for all India purposes made the continuance of English inevitable as a language of inter-provincial importance; and so on. But a great victory was undoubtedly won and by 1937, the nation was fairly on the way to adopt Hindustani as the All-India language and the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction at the university stage also.

6. In the field of primary education, the achievements have not been considerable. As in the case of University education, the movement for the extension of primary education began a little before 1921. The work of Gokhale was taken up by Vithalbhai Patel who successfully piloted, in 1918, an Act for the permissive introduction of compulsion in Municipal areas of the Province of Bombay. This was followed by a great activity in favour of compulsion and Primary Education Acts were passed in all provinces except the N. W. F. province during the period under review. Thus in 1919, four Acts were passed viz. the Bengal Primary Education Act, the Punjab Primary Education Act, the United Provinces Primary Education Act, and the Bihar and Orissa Primary Education Act. In 1920, three more Acts were passed viz. the City of Bombay Primary Education Act, the Central Provinces Primary Education Act, and Madras Elementary Education Act. In 1923, the Bombay Primary Education Act was passed. In 1926, the United Provinces (District Boards) Primary Education Act and the Assam Primary Education Act were passed. Finally in 1930, the Bengal (Rural) Primary Education Act was passed. All these Acts were generally based on the principles of Gokhale's Bill. They gave wide powers of control and administration to the local bodies which were now made responsible for primary education; they generally left the initiative regarding the introduction of compulsory education in the hands of local bodies, although, in some Acts, power was reserved to Government to take the initiative if the local body concerned would fail to do so; and they all prescribed the manner in which Government would assist primary education financially.

In fact, the decade 1917 to 1927 may rightly be regarded as the boom-period of primary education. It was

in this period that the several Primary Education Acts were passed or framed; programmes of expansion and improvement were drawn up in almost all provinces; and money flowed in towards primary education with a far greater speed than ever before. A burst of enthusiasm swept the children into schools with unparalleled rapidity. In 1916-17, the number of recognised primary schools was 1,34,478 and their pupils numbered 55,62,001. In 1921-22 the number of primary schools was, 1,55,019 and that of their pupils was 61,09,803. But in 1922-27 the number of primary schools rose to 1,84,829 and that of their pupils to 80,17,923. It is easy to see that the achievements of Indian Ministers and local bodies were really considerable.

7. But soon a reaction set in for two reasons; the first was the financial stringency due to the world economic depression to which I have already referred. The second was the report of the Hartog Committee. This Committee was appointed by the Simon Commission under the Chairmanship of Sir Philip Hartog to enquire into and report on "education and its organisation in British India in relation to political and constitutional conditions and potentialities of progress". I may conveniently state the main findings of the Committee in its own words:

"Our Review of the growth of education reveals many points of fundamental interest for the political future of India. The largely increased enrolment in primary schools indicates that the old time apathy of the masses is breaking down. There has been a social and political awakening of the women of India and an expressed demand on their behalf for education and social reform. There has been rapid progress in the number of Muhammadans receiving instruction. Efforts have been made to improve the condition of the depressed classes and these classes are

beginning to respond to the effort and to assert their right to education. On all sides there has been a desire on the part of leaders of public opinion to understand and to grapple with the complex and difficult problems of education; and large additional expenditure has been proposed by Education Ministers and willingly voted by the Legislative Councils. That is one side of the picture, but there is another.

"Throughout the whole educational system there is waste and ineffectiveness. In the primary system, which from our point of view should be designed to produce literacy and the capacity to exercise an intelligent vote, the waste is appalling. So far as we can judge, the vast increase in numbers in primary schools produces no commensurate increase in literacy for only a small proportion of those who are at the primary stage reach Class IV, in which the attainment of literacy may be expected. In one province, despite a very large increase in the number of primary schools and pupils and in the expenditure, the number of pupils who reached Class IV was actually less by nearly 30,000 in 1927 than it was ten years previously. It is to be remembered that under present conditions of rural life, and with the lack of suitable vernacular literature, a child has very little chances of attaining literacy after leaving school; and indeed even for the literate there are many chances of relapse into illiteracy.

"The wastage in the case of girls is even more serious than in the case of boys. The disparity in education and literacy between women and men so far from decreasing by the effort made is actually increasing. The disparity between the wealthier parts of the country and the poorer parts also tends to increase."*

* Report, P. 345

8. The connection of the Committee with the Simon Commission was alone sufficient to make it unpopular in nationalist quarters. But the above findings of the Committee and its recommendations to emphasize "Quality" rather than "Quantity" definitely alienated nationalist sympathies. It is hardly to be wondered, therefore, if the report of the Hartog Committee was given a hot reception by Indian opinion. The statistics of the Committee were challenged; it was pointed out that the wastage and ineffectiveness was not so great as the Hartog Committee had pictured it to be, and it was even alleged that the exaggeration of the evils by the Hartog Committee was due to a desire to run down Indian Ministers and their work and to show that Indians could not manage things without European assistance; and the Committee's unwillingness to recommend a vigorous extension of compulsory education was regarded as an anti-national effort directed towards sabotaging mass education and mass awakening.

9. On the other hand, the report of the Committee obtained a very enthusiastic reception in official quarters. The officials had been talking of "quality" as against "quantity" ever since 1902, possibly because England had begun a drive for efficiency at the close of the nineteenth century. They forgot that England took up an efficiency drive *after* its programme for the expansion of education had been completed between 1800 to 1895. The situation in India was different. Her programme of expansion had hardly begun and, thanks to a benign administration, India in 1927 was practically at the point where England stood nearly a century ago. What India needed, therefore, was not the English methods of the twentieth century but the English methods of the nineteenth. Unfortunately, our officials could not appreciate these differences

and began to insist on quality in a mechanical imitation of British models, ever since 1902. Their view dominated educational policy between 1910 to 1921. But when education was transferred to Indian control, they bent before the storm of public enthusiasm and yielded to a programme of expansion. But the report of the Hartog Committee, with its emphasis on quality, strengthened their hands and they raised up their heads again. The drive for quality began once more with a greater zeal, and helped by financial stringency, succeeded in stemming very largely the tide of rapid expansion of primary education which had begun in 1922.

10. A few quotations from the Directors' reports will show how the official policy came to be entirely dominated by the recommendations of the Hartog Committee. For instance, the Central Provinces report for 1931-32 takes consolation in the thought that "inefficient schools have been removed from the struggle" and that "several schools with comparatively small enrolment have been closed". The Bihar and Orissa report for the same year, a Province where primary schools *decreased* by 2333, observes that the effect of retrenchment "has been salutary as the majority of schools which have disappeared were unaided institutions, a type of school which is usually ineffective in the reduction of literacy". In Bombay the number of primary schools increased by a poor 797 between 1926-27 and 1931-32, an event on which the Educational Commissioner with the Government of India is constrained to remark that "it is doubtful whether, with its depleted finances, this province can afford to multiply its primary schools at so *rapid* a pace, *especially when other aspects of education need prior attention*". I need not dilate any more on this point. These illustrations will show how the wind blew.

11. The foregoing discussion will have prepared the ground to understand the conflict of this period which had now assumed an *educational* form. The two parties to the conflict were the die-hard officials on the one hand and the Indian nationalist opinion on the other. The issues in the conflict were several. Firstly, there was the ever present question of students and politics—a problem that was thrown into sharp relief by the Non-co-operation and the Civil Disobedience movements. The officials would have preferred the students to develop a loyalty to the Empire, or to grow up a colourless view on politics. Indian opinion, on the other hand, would have liked to nationalize education and to systematically train up students in love and respect for their Mother-land. Secondly, the problem of vocational education was also a point at issue. Indian nationalists demanded a rapid and planned industrial development of the country, and the reorganisation of all vocational education with this end in view. European officials held a different idea. As the first part of the Indian view was not likely to suit British Capitalists, British educationists only played with the problem of vocational education and were not prepared to accept comprehensive schemes. A peculiar instance of this conflict is furnished by the report of the Committee on Technical and Industrial Education appointed by the Government of Bombay under the Chairmanship of Sir M. Visvesvarayya (1921-22). All the Indian members of the Committee, there were six of them, put forward a comprehensive scheme of reorganisation; and all the European members, there were ten of them, were simply staggered by these recommendations and put forward a tame scheme in the official style which would have required several centuries to industrialise the Province. Thirdly, the conflict regarding the medium of instruction still continued. The battle at the secondary stage

was over but another battle at the university stage still remained to be fought and won. Lastly, the biggest of conflicts waged round the question of compulsory primary education. The officials advocated a cautious advance and a concentration on quality. The nationalist opinion was in favour of a rapid and a forced march to universal literacy on the model, for instance, of Russia. These conflicts were bitter and were fought with considerable vehemence throughout the period under review.

12. I shall close this Act with a few observations on non-official effort in education. Most of the Indian educationists of this period worked within the official system and directed their energies firstly to expansion and secondly to the building up of a better type of educational institutions. But there were others who thought of trying independent educational experiments after their own ideas. The several national Vidyapeeths that were organised at the time of the Non-cooperation movement, the S.N.D.T. Indian Women's University, and the Visvabharati of Rabindranath Tagore are instances of this type. Not all these attempts succeeded. But many thrived and their work is sure to be of considerable importance when the problem of laying the foundations of National Education will be taken up in right earnest.

Act The Fifth

(1937-1942)

TOWARDS NATIONALISATION

1. With the introduction of Provincial Autonomy and assumption of office by the Indian National Congress in seven provinces out of eleven, the fifth Act in this great drama may be said to have opened. The difficulties of the earlier period did not exist any more. The Education Ministers under Provincial Autonomy could command far larger resources than the ministers under Dyarchy ever did; the Heaven-born I. E. S. was on the brink of extinction, if not actually extinct; at any rate, it was not in a position to stem the tide of public opinion; non-official educational thought which was but in its infancy in 1921 had now grown to maturity and gathered considerable independence and strength. The occasion was, therefore, ripe for launching a big drive towards creating a national system of education; and this was exactly the step taken in most of the Indian Provinces. As an illustration of the valuable work done during the few years following 1937, I might give you an account of educational activities in the Province of Bombay.

2. One of the first activities of the Bombay Government was to recognise the value of non-official advice, to give it an official status, and to associate it closely with the administration and reorganisation of education. Until this time, the Director of Public Instruction was the only adviser of Government. But now Government created a number of Advisory Boards, viz. the Provincial Board of

Primary Education, the Provincial Board of Secondary Education, the Provincial Board of Physical Education, the Provincial Board of Adult Education, the Provincial Board for Education in Hindustani and the Provincial Board for Basic Education. The creation of these Boards made it possible for Government to avail itself of the best expert advice in the Province and to do things more efficiently and quickly than would otherwise have been possible. It was Mr. Kher's idea to have later on a Board of Education for the Province which was to consist of the Chairmen of all these Boards with the Education Minister as President and the Director of Public Instruction as Secretary. The idea was excellent, but unfortunately, it did not materialise.

3. In the field of University Education, Government recognised the degrees and diplomas granted by the S. N. D. T. University and the National Vidyapeeths. Government also showed its appreciation of the work done by the S. N. D. T. University by sanctioning an annual grant.

4. In the field of Secondary Education, Government declared that it was unwilling to maintain purely literary High Schools, an activity for which plenty of private effort was forthcoming. Government, therefore decided that it should only confine itself to those aspects of Secondary Education which had not attracted private effort as yet. Some Government High Schools were, therefore, closed and converted into training institutions for primary teachers; some others were changed into Girls' High Schools, and some were changed into Vocational High Schools. Secondly, Government gave a great impetus to the introduction of compulsory physical education in Secondary Schools. The adoption of simple uniforms by

students was encouraged; special grants were sanctioned to schools on account of physical Education; a splendid Institute of Physical Education was organised at Kandivli and a large-scale programme of training secondary teachers in Physical Education was undertaken. Thirdly, Government opened a Training College for Secondary Teachers at Belgaum specially to provide for the needs of secondary teachers from Maharashtra and Karnatak. Lastly, the grants to Secondary Schools were distributed on more equitable principles.

5. It was in the field of primary education however, that the greatest activity of Government was seen. The Primary Education Act of 1923 was amended. The new Act created a Provincial Board of Primary Education, made the Administrative officers the servants of Government (The rules under the Act gave them powers over appointments, transfers and discipline of Primary teachers), and assumed several emergency powers to Government. A scheme of capitation grants to private primary schools was started in 1938-39 and was so successful that the number of pupils under primary instruction rose from 11,92,000 in 1937-38 to 15,60,000 in 1940-41. Large change were made regarding the system of training primary teachers. Intermittent training was discontinued and continuous course of two years' training was drawn up. The number of training institutions was increased and the capacity of existing institutions was enlarged. A definite programme for the training of all teachers in service within ten years was drawn up. The 8% cut which had been imposed on the grants to Local Boards was stopped and some provision for additional grants was also made.

6. Similarly, in Adult Education also, Government undertook considerable work. A Special Committee for

Adult Education in Bombay City was constituted and a grant of Rs. 50,000 a year sanctioned for it. A provision of Rs. 2,00,000 was also made for aiding adult education classes in the mofussil.

7. One activity of All India importance deserves a very careful study, I mean, the great experiment of Basic Education. Time forbids me to go into details; but I might just request you to give this idea your most earnest attention. The experiment has several important features and it is a unique contribution to the solution of India's complex educational problems.

Epilogue

1. Such, in brief, is a broad review of modern education in India. It suggests several questions of great importance on which further investigation and research are necessary. The subject of the history of Indian education has not yet attracted that attention which it deserves. But there are already signs that the situation is improving and I have no doubt that, ere long, there will be plenty of lights on those parts of our educational history which are still in the dark.

2. It will have been seen that the evils of our educational system have had a peculiar origin. Most of them arose because the planners of our educational system were foreigners incapable of identifying themselves with national aspirations. Some were due to inefficiency and a few others to the indifference of officials. But it is not for these mistakes that I would wreak on the administration 'the wrath that garners in my heart'. After all, mistakes are natural, and, when remedied, they go by the dignified appellation of experience. But what happened in India was this; the gulf that existed between the Indian people and British administrators—widened by the conflict between the economic interests of Britain and India—made the occurrence of mistakes inevitable later on, the complacency of our officials made the detection of mistakes a difficult and a slow affair; and even when mistakes were discovered, the innate conservatism of the British people made remedial measures difficult, if not impossible. When Indian opinion was awakened and began to criticize official schemes, the racial pride of the Britisher was offended. He could not bear to see that the wisdom and bonafides

of a white man should be challenged by a black one; and instead of correcting himself, he developed an attitude of uncompromising hostility to nationalist ideals. It was thus that the educational conflicts which led to immense suffering and waste arose in the first three decades of this century.

3. What is now needed is a *Swadeshi Movement in education*. We need a school of Indian educationists who can think for themselves and plan, with confidence and courage, a truly national system of education for India. A pale imitation of English models is hardly of any use. England is a small and a compact nation; we are a vast continent. England is urban; we are rural. England is industrial; we are agricultural; England is Imperial; we have to fight for our freedom. With these vast differences in the social, political, and economic background, we cannot accept England as a model. We must cut a new course and look for guidance to countries where the social and economic background is similar to ours. This has never been done and we suffer because England has been the *one* model for us all through our history. It was pardonable if British Officials committed the mistake of adopting British institutions as models. But what pains one is the love of some of our own people for an apish imitation of England, and their desire to continue to do what English officials did before and to repeat endlessly what they said years ago.

May it be too much if I expect that a "Tilak College of Education" would make a material contribution to this Swadeshi Movement in Education which the nation so badly needs today?